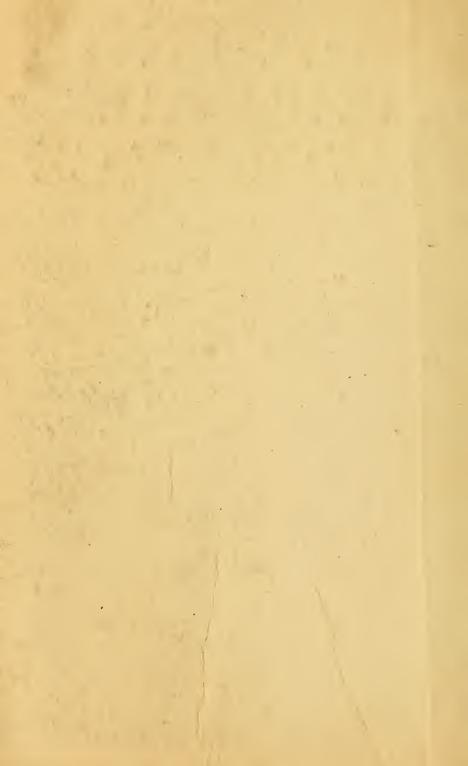
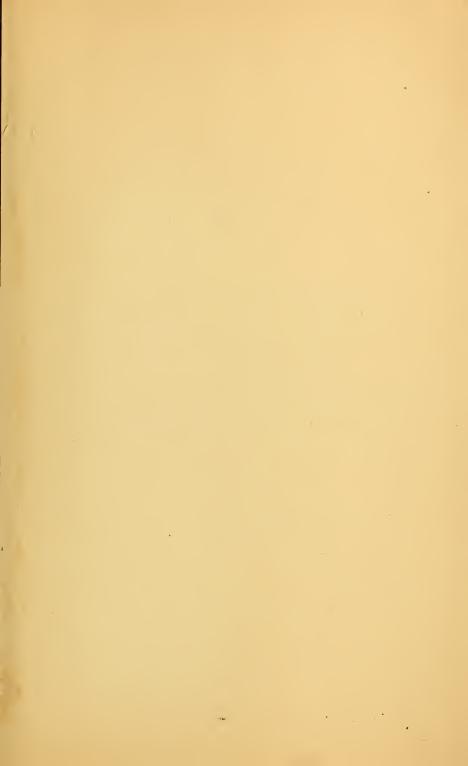
BUILDING THEATRE PATRONAGE

A Chalmers Publication



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Successful amusement merchandising is not the sale of tickets to those who naturally would desire to see your entertainment, nor to those who have already been attracted by the better conduct of your enterprise.

The real profit comes from selling other new patrons who are drawn to your theatre through good advertising and held through good management.



BUILDING THEATRE PATRONAGE

MANAGEMENT AND MERCHANDISING

By

JOHN F. BARRY

AND

EPES W. SARGENT

FIRST PRINTING
JUNE, 1927

CHALMERS PUBLISHING COMPANY
516 Fifth Avenue S NEW YORK

CHALMERS PUBLISHING COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America
By
W. B. Conkey Co., Hammond, Ind.

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OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Moving Picture World

Published weekly. A modern trade paper devoted to the interests of the motion picture industry. Subscription \$3.00 per year.

Cine-Mundial

Published monthly. A general magazine published in Spanish, having a large circulation in all Spanish-speaking countries of the world. Subscription \$2.00 per year.

Richardson's 5th Edition—Handbook of Projection

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The amateur scenario writer's best friend. Nearly 400 pages of information on script writing as well as actual scenario working models. Price \$3.00.

Picture Theatre Advertising

An excellent companion book for BUILDING THEATRE PATRONAGE. This book, by Epes W. Sargent, contains 300 pages of practical information on advertising the picture to the public. Price \$2.00.

CHALMERS PUBLISHING COMPANY

516 Fifth Avenue

NEW YORK

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

FIFTEEN years ago an experienced old showman said: "There are only three things to know about running a theatre—how to get 'em in—how to get 'em out—and how to get 'em back again!"

To get them in the first time is easy.

To get them out is easy.

It's getting them back again that's not so easy.

When the old showman was asked what there was to know about getting them back again, he answered: "A bookful!"

This was true fifteen years ago. It is just as true today. The truth has wider application than ever, for now there are about fifteen thousand theatres in the United States in which motion pictures are shown. Every week at these theatres forty-five million admissions are averaged. And yet no theatre is playing to capacity with every seat occupied at every performance.

Only a relatively small percentage of the vast potential patronage for motion picture theatres has been secured. More people would attend motion picture theatres and attend them oftener. On what does this increase of motion picture theatre patronage depend? It depends in good part upon improvement in theatre operation, because theatre managers are in direct contact with the public.

The usual excuse given for unsatisfactory patronage is that the photoplays available are inferior. This excuse is weak.

If so, why then does the very same program shown in two different theatres attract a small audience at one, and a large audience at the other? For the simple reason that in one case the program was effectively merchandised, and in the other, it was not. In one case, improved methods of theatre operation prevailed, while in the other, the operation was defective.

How unfair it is to attribute unsatisfactory patronage entirely to the program is proved by another comparison. Two

competitive theatres are showing programs of different merit. The theatre with the inferior program can outgross the other theatre simply because the operation is of a higher grade. The merchandising is more effective at the successful theatre. A regular clientele has been built up over a long period of consistently good operation. High grade operation over a period of time carries a theatre along even when the program is inferior to what is offered by competitors.

Because increase in theatre patronage depends so much on the theatre manager, theatre management is an extremely important influence for the progress of the motion picture industry. To improve motion picture product the producer needs more revenue. Revenue must come ultimately from the public. The theatre manager is in direct contact with the public. His improved methods of retailing motion picture entertainment will bring increased revenue, and thus make possible further progress of the industry.

It may be argued that the more successful a theatre becomes, the higher the film rentals charged, and a manager consequently may ask why he should develop his business to benefit the producer. The answer is simple. Increased rentals mean better pictures, which in turn mean better business at the theatre. When a manager pays higher rentals for photoplays, he is investing in a better product for the following season, rather than merely enriching the producer.

Improvement in theatre operation is possible by using as a guide methods and practices that have proved successful. Theatre management is relatively not long established. But a management that serves so large a percentage of the total population of the United States every day, must have developed methods and practices whose study will prove profitable.

Since the first attempts to build patronage for motion picture theatres, many capable exhibitors have grappled with common problems. Even the mistakes that have been made can serve a useful purpose. And besides there is a bulk of helpful information available which when properly organized will help experienced theatre managers to systematize and

improve their work. It will short-circuit the road to efficiency for others who lack long years of experience.

It is the purpose of this book to present such information in a way that will prove helpful to theatre managers. No set of "rule of thumb" principles will be given. Methods and practices will be discussed only to stimulate study and thought. Like any other profession, motion picture theatre management requires constant study. It also requires showmanship.

Showmanship should be considered in its true meaning. It is not a mysterious quality which cannot be developed. It can be developed by study.

There is a much-repeated saying: "Showmen are born and not made." Like so many other proverbs that have been strengthened by repetition, this does seem true at first thought. It does seem as if study and hard thinking have no place in showmanship.

If this were so, then the knack of showmanship would be a mysterious ability given by birth to the fortunate few and positively beyond the attainment of others. It can be admitted that the great showman, the eccentric genius, has a gift which was not deliberately developed. Such showmen are rare. Even these resort to study to keep up with the times.

But there are thousands of others who as theatre managers are responsible for building theatre patronage. In these the sense of showmanship exists and can be developed. It is for these that this discussion of theatre management is intended. There are always things to be learned that makes the expression of showmanship more effective. Even the master showmen are, by their own admission, constantly studying, constantly observing what others are doing, and often enough reviving some old time stunt which is "so old that it is new."

In moments of confidence they admit that their eyes and ears are constantly open for new ideas, and that by observation they have built up their fund of knowledge.

One master showman when acknowledging compliments for a very successful newspaper campaign admitted confidentially: "I got that idea five years ago from the campaign of a small mid-western theatre manager."

For any theatre manager theatre operation can never be a closed book. Every day sees the adoption of some new idea. Individual thought and initiative are all-important if progress is to be made. There is always something new to be learned about theatre management.

No attempt is made in these pages to set down routine practices that can be followed in the same way everywhere. Theatre operation cannot be standardized. Every theatre is different. Every community is different. Every operation is different. Even the problems of a particular theatre are constantly changing. New conditions develop and bring new problems that were never met before.

Efficient theatre management requires constant readjustment, constant novelty and constant change. Of course, some basic principles of management will always remain unchanged. Human nature is fundamentally the same everywhere. So is showmanship. But the methods and practices suggested here are not in use at any one theatre. They represent a composite analysis of many theatres, and consequently will not be applicable in the same way to all theatres.

Managers in towns of from 30,000 to 60,000 must meet conditions and solve problems that are almost unknown to managers of metropolitan theatres, and vice versa. Yet there is much in common in the principles they follow. The main difference lies in application. The manager of a small theatre can get the germ of an idea from theatre operation as practiced in a large theatre and adapt it to his needs and conditions. Ofttimes, the manager of a metropolitan theatre can learn things from his country cousin. Because the very pressure of working out so many details of operation without the assistance of specialized experts taxes the ingenuity of the small theatre manager, he often devises methods which are worth the study of managers in larger operations. Consequently, the source of the methods and practices discussed is not important. The chief consideration is their possibility for general use.

The consideration of standard practices is helpful only if one remembers that the soundest theory must give way to practical expediency in unusual circumstances. No one can make this decision for a particular theatre better than the capable manager who is right on the spot and understands conditions.

The factors which influence building theatre patronage are practically countless. They begin with a selection of a theatre site, the details of theatre financing and the theatre rental. In some cases the theatre manager is struggling under a handicap due to disadvantages of a location which even perfect management and master showmanship cannot overcome. In other cases, an exorbitant property rental imposes an unnatural burden.

However, the selection of the theatre site, property rental and similar matters which require a training distinct from that of the average theatre manager, are not discussed in this book. It is the typical daily problems of the average manager that are considered. The consideration is intended as well for the manager whose operation is entirely independent, as for the manager who can rely on circuit operation assistance. Even in circuit operation the strength of the circuit depends on the efficiency of its individual theatre managers. Circuit operation of theatres will always differ from chain store operation which does not demand exceptional initiative from chain store managers, because chain stores retail standard products for which price is the determining sales factor. Retailing motion picture theatre entertainment demands initiative. It demands ingenuity. It demands study for each individual operation.

The time has come when there is no longer so-called "easy money" in theatre operation. Competition is keen. Patrons everywhere are more critical and more shrewd in judging values. When motion picture entertainment was a novelty, and when competition was not so keen, profits were possible even with careless operation. Now the smallest detail deserves attention. That is why emphasis is given here to small details, because perfection in small details often means a difference between profit and loss.

Because theatre management requires constant study, there should be a book such as this for ready reference. This book will serve the theatre manager best if it is read not only once

and put aside, but referred to regularly, because it carries practical suggestions that will be helpful to the manager in meeting the every-day problems of theatre management.



AN EXAMPLE OF A CUTOUT LETTER BANNER

Letters cut from the poster or designed by the sign writer are cut from compo-board and mounted in place of the title banner, giving a more sightly effect. These may be hung on fine wires, two wires being used to each letter to prevent undue swaying. A tennis or fish net also makes a good background. The use of a metallic paint or flitter is especially effective, since the slightly moving letters flash the reflection of the lobby lights. The box office is dressed to match the title of the picture.



CHAPTER II

THE MOTION PICTURE THEATRE

THE motion picture theatre has a romantic history. In the short period of about twenty years it has had a development which is unrivalled in the history of American business. A review of that development should inspire every one associated with the motion picture theatre.

Its beginning is now shrouded in uncertainty because the witnesses did not consider the beginning significant enough to record. Then followed a period when its mushroom growth was so rapid and so widespread that even careful recording could not keep pace with it. Recently the development has become so varied that in the scope of this brief outline it can only be indicated. Even the most optimistic forecast of future development would seem inadequate.

Early History.

However, uncertain as is its early history, we know that our modern motion picture theatre had a humble forerunner. Remember the penny arcades where you dropped a penny in the slot and applied your eye to a peep hole to watch a strip of pictures move for twenty or thirty seconds? At that time scientists were experimenting with projecting a picture on the screen. Prior to 1899, there were less than one hundred projection machines in the country, and the motion picture was used in vaudeville theatres as a novelty whose entertainment value was the simple fact that pictures actually moved.

About 1902 an empty store next to a penny arcade was rented and furnished with screen, chairs, a projection machine and a few hand-painted signs. Where the very first of these "motion picture theatres" was established is not certain. Some said New York, others gave the glory to Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, or Norfolk, Va. Before the disagreement could be settled a nation-wide development was in full stride.

7

During the year 1906 and 1907 motion picture theatres or "nickolettes" were spreading all over the country. They were only remodeled stores, and cannot be dignified with the name "motion picture theatres."

These "store-show" theatres were very much alike. The tiny entrance, the stuffy vestibule, the curtained-off auditorium, long and narrow, the low ceiling, straight rows of uncomfortable seats, dim, uncertain lighting, the cheap, flashy picture on none too smooth canvas, the banging of a tuneless piano, the rattling of the shutter from the projection booth, the stuffy air—hot in summer and cold in winter—and the eye-strained audience huddled in the straight, stiff chairs were details universally common. Here and there crude plaster decorations at the entrance were a distinctive touch. The more daring exhibitors added to the entrance display a few electric lights which served only to make the plaster decorations seem more ugly. Patrons almost welcomed the familiar notice on the screen "All those who have seen the picture will kindly pass out."

But the next step in the development only brought larger "stores" and further attempts at ugly decoration. The result was over-seated rooms with meagre equipment. An exception was the Victoria Theatre, Philadelphia, erected about 1906 by Sigmund Lubin—the first "real" theatre structure in which motion pictures were emphasized rather than vaudeville.

In 1912, the Lyceum Theatre, New York City, was leased to show the photoplay "Queen Elizabeth." For the first time, the motion picture was presented as the main attraction in the setting of a real theatre.

Remodeling.

Gradually, legitimate theatres were remodelled into motion picture houses. At that time the remodelling was not very expensive. Temporary booths made of sheet metal or asbestos-lumber were set up in the balcony, and there was a feeble attempt to arrange the lighting so that the screen would be protected. But such remodelling was temporary in character because the photoplay still seemed even to the most confident, only a fad which did not justify a permanent structure.

But the time came, and came rapidly, when the popularity of the motion picture demanded theatres designed for the express purpose of showing motion pictures. An outside influence helped to determine this development. In the makeshift "store-shows" disasters, collapses and fires had occurred. This prompted municipalities to establish very strict regulations for the building of motion picture theatres. At that time the stringency of the revised laws might have seemed like a handicap, but they resulted in notable improvements in both construction and design, and in the invention of many appliances which tended to the safety and comfort of patrons. How strict the building code is concerning motion picture theatres, is evident from the fact that in the building code of New York City, nine pages are devoted exclusively to the theatre, while all other classes of construction combined have only forty-three pages. The building code of smaller cities is just as strict. In the code published by the National Board of Underwriters, the theatre is allotted twenty-eight pages out of one hundred and nineteen.

A New Structure.

Such strict regulations concerning theatre construction centered the attention of the leading architects of the country on a unique problem—theatres especially constructed for motion picture entertainment. The fact that so many great architects concentrated on this one problem, developed a perfection of technique in design and construction which is now unexcelled by any other type of structure.

The builders of motion picture theatres had very little to use as a guiding precedent. Nor did they have in existing theatres any artistic model. There were few theatres that were worthy to be considered as masterpieces of architecture from which the motion picture theatre might be modelled. Their architectural inspiration had to be furnished by every type of structure which enriched the architecture of the world.

People began to speak their confidence in motion pictures with the symbols of real estate, brick and mortar. There came the first great motion picture theatres, the Strand, New York

City; the Stillman, Cleveland; and the Central Park, Chicago, to mention only a few.

Palatial motion picture theatres rapidly took a prominent place on the main thoroughfares of the leading cities of America. Then, even smaller communities began to boast of modern theatres whose attractiveness and architectural perfection were a source of pride to the community. Everywhere the motion picture theatre was becoming a potent factor in the architectural development of communities.

At this writing, in the big cities, a sweeping change is under way. Several thousand smaller theatres are being replaced by great neighborhood houses of the latest type with adequate parking space for cars. The progress from the store-show development has been so advanced that more than twenty per cent of our theatres may be classed as modern in every respect. Over 400 theatres of the million dollar type have been erected in the seventy odd cities with a population of over 100,000. The total investment in the motion picture industry is about two billion dollars. Of this amount, more than one-half represents the investment in motion picture theatres. Authorities in the building world estimate that some hundreds of millions will be spent in the coming year on new motion picture theatre buildings and the up-to-date equipment and renovation of existing motion picture theatres.

Fifteen Years.

The extent of the development of the past fifteen years is best appreciated by a series of contrasts. Today, in the great theatres, three thousand people listen enraptured to the great fifty-piece symphonic orchestra or the \$75,000 organ. Fifteen years ago, a rattling piano battered out its accompaniment. Today, thousands gather on national holidays under the theatre fold where patriotic programs stimulate the national spirit and develop a better appreciation of its significance. Fifteen years ago, respectable citizens paused before the nickelodeon, glanced furtively up and down the street, and then slipped into a dingy hole in the wall for their holiday entertainment. Today, theatre staffs of over two hundred in some theatres carry on the operation with military precision. Fifteen years ago, the

old time showman might have had an assistant or two, but he preferred to sell the ticket, collect it at the entrance, drop the nickel into the player piano and then hurry up to help the projectionist crank the machine—he and the assistant were the theatre staff.

Fifteen years ago, stiff, straight-back chairs added no comfort to the patron's theatre hour. Today, the attention given to perfecting the smallest detail of the comfortable theatre chair, equals that given to the entire equipment of the old nickelodeon. Fifteen years ago, the foul air that was cold in winter and hot in summer, regulated by a few fans which only churned the sour air, justified the attacks against the unsanitary condition of the nickelodeon. Today, great heating and cooling and ventilating systems make the air-conditioned atmosphere of the theatre unequalled. Fifteen years ago, the average exhibitor was either a florid-faced ex-circus showman or one of a hundred untrained tradesmen attracted by the possibility of quick revenue on small investments. Today, theatre management is a specialized profession whose technical details can be mastered only through careful study by a fine type of man power which is devoting itself to what is recognized as a dignified career of helpful service. Fifteen years ago, a visit to the "motion picture theatre" was characterized as a "stride on the downward path." Today, our leading citizens, from the President down, pay tribute to the moralizing influence of the motion picture theatre.

The contrast of financing is even more startling. Today, a theatre chair in the modern theatre costs as much as the week's film rental in the old days. The cost of electric signs, marquees and display boards alone, equal what would have bought complete a small chain of pioneer "store-shows." There was a time when complete equipment cost less than \$1500, while today the cost of such equipment for the larger sized houses averages about \$150,000.

Patrons.

The leading motion picture theatres now rank with the most imposing structures in every community. All the arts—painting, music, sculpture and architecture—combine to complete

their beauty. Those who do not understand the motion picture theatre, have been puzzled by the architecturally splendid structure, the palatial foyer, the luxurious touches which typify the leading theatres. Impatiently they ask, "What's all this for?"

If you understand why patrons visit the motion picture theatre, you understand why architects plan as they do. People come to the motion picture theatre to live an hour or two in the land of romance. They seek escape from the humdrum existence of daily life. There are few other places in the present commercialized world where they can get mental rejuvenation and imaginative play at so small a cost. The fire-side has been replaced by unromantic radiator pipes. Other meeting places have disappeared. People realize that for a small charge they can be lifted up on a magic carpet and set down in a dream city amidst palatial surroundings where worry and care can never enter, where pleasure hides in every shadow.

Watch the bright light in the eyes of the tired shop girl within the modern motion picture theatre as she sighs with satisfaction walking amid furnishings that once delighted the hearts of queens. See the tired toil-worn father whose dreams have never come true. Look inside his heart as he finds strength and rest within the theatre. Here we have an institution of recreation and rest, of imaginative release, all in the spirit of playland. Here is an economic necessity. Here is a shrine of democracy where there are no privileged patrons. All the decorative details are elements that make up the atmosphere of a palace, to stimulate the imagination of tired minds and re-create the strength of weary hearts. The architect has mastered the psychology of the theatre-goer. understands the patrons' love of adventure and the craving for the beautiful and the luxurious, and with deft touches excites the spirit of romance by the very structure and decoration of the theatre.

The entrance arouses the patrons' spirit of adventure, for the graceful lines of the theatre are in contrast to the cold straight commercial lines of nearby buildings. The lobby is so designed that its fascination makes waiting a pleasure—because of rare paintings, impressive statuary, costly rugs and beautiful tapestries. Even the electric signs, that for the early theatre were crudely designed by tinsmiths, are now carefully studied to blend with the architectural treatment of the whole. The great stairways are enticing where an ugly staircase would suggest only a tiring climb. The theatre itself is an entertainment.

Master architects of other centuries were not cramped for space. They could construct with a generous hand, and were not forced to consider dividend returns on money invested. The architect of the motion picture theatre, building on ground whose value per foot represents a small-sized fortune, faces a serious problem in economics. He must keep a delicate balance between the original cost plus operating expenses and the possible capacity gross. The very variety of the plots available require individual planning for every picture theatre. Despite such handicaps, the majority of motion picture theatres are architectural gems.

Personality.

It has been said that theatres have a personality. That personality has its most effective expression in those who make up the theatre staff. They give a human touch to it all. They bring life to the cold marble palace. Their courtesy impresses the fact that the patron is a guest, and they the hundred hosts who bid welcome. Their very gestures are courtly. Members of the staff realize that their position is not one of servility. They are the personal representatives of the company in its dealings with the public, adding cheerfulness and intelligence to service. Their very smile has the warmth of friendliness which makes such relationship so indispensable. If the architecture of the theatre has a bettering influence on theatre patrons, then the fine manhood of those who are its theatre hosts has an event better influence. The service personnel of our great theatres is their richest possession.

The motion picture may be the silent drama, but music has made it eloquent. Have you seen the great audiences of a palatial theatre—the rows and rows and rows of upturned faces—thousands listening breathlessly, eager-eyed, intense, while the great symphony orchestra fills the mighty structure

with the strains of an overture from Wagner? Or on a national holiday, have you tried to check your emotions as the same great orchestra renders a martial strain that inspired a nation?

After all this, who can say that those thousands do not come from the theatres with a better appreciation of the significance of that national holiday, with a new born pride, and with a stronger resolve to live up to what it is that makes us better citizens?

The motion picture theatre is an influence for betterment, the extent of which has yet to be calculated.

Conclusion.

From the earliest theatre of the Greeks, where the hillside accommodated those who sought entertainment, down through the years to the modern palatial motion picture theatre, every advance of science and art was adopted by the theatre. Consider the lighting. It has passed from torches to candles, to oil lamps, to illuminating gas, to limelight, to the carbon arc, to the incandescent lamp-yet all along that path of development, the theatre was the first to adopt what progress brought. Consider decoration. Although artistic decoration is not something that can be regulated by rule, the theatre has attempted to use each new material and each new device which would enhance decorative effects. Today, the decorative effects of the motion picture theatres reveal new possibilities to the millions who visit them, and thus are developing taste and appreciation for the decorative. Manufacturers admit that the exceptional increase in the home use of colored drapes and colored lamps can be attributed to the motion picture theatre.

The influence of the motion picture theatre is far-reaching. Its development seems magic. Yet practical vision made it possible. What we have today would not have been possible without the sacrifice and tireless efforts of those who never turned from a vision.

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEATRE ADVERTISING

THEATRE advertising has developed from crude and simple forms to the efficient use of a wide variety of mediums.

In the early days of the nickelodeon it was "pictures that move" which sold theatre tickets. The novelty of "pictures that move" was about the only thing that could then be advertised. There were no titles, no stars, no well-known stories. little dramatic interest. In 1905, with the release of "The Great Train Robbery," eight hundred feet in length, came the first title that could be advertised as a feature. The consequent production of full 1,000-foot reels gave a supply of titles, but most of them were meaningless. They offered nothing around which to build an advertising campaign, and two reelers did not appear for another six years. Stars were not only unknown, but the producing companies did all in their power to hide the identity of the players so that higher salaries would not be justified by star popularity. As late as 1909, the Biograph Company with its stock players was so determined to hide the identity of the players, that when Dot Davenport admitted to a home-town newspaper reporter that she was a member of the Biograph stock company, she was discharged.

The exhibitors made a feeble attempt to advertise trade names. They attempted the showing of photoplays of one company through an entire week so that they could display a banner reading "Biograph Week," or "Pathé Week." The producing company was the "star" and the exclusive advertising factor. But trade names then had small influence in selling tickets. It was the novelty of the new entertainment "pictures that move" and the very low admission price that kept the nickelodeons crowded.

Star Advertising.

Star advertising began when in August, 1909, Florence Turner was starred by Vitagraph. It was not until two years later that Mary Pickford was made the star of Imp Productions.

At first, star names were limited to trade paper advertising. But exhibitors were quick to carry out the innovation in their appeal to the public. We find the name Mary Pickford advertised with the explanatory title "Biograph's Little Mary." The good results of this practice justified the starring of Marion Leonard and Florence Lawrence. Ever since, personal popularity of the players has been an outstanding advertising influence.

Fan magazines were then unknown. It was not until 1910 that the Motion Picture Story Magazine was started. Amusement pages in the newspapers ignored the motion picture. There was no national advertising by producers. There was absolutely no advertising material of any kind prepared by producers to help exhibitors advertise. The nickelodeon manager purchased stock posters at lithograph storehouses, where posters prepared for legitimate productions were stored away.

Usually there was no connection between the poster and the photoplay which it was used to advertise. The most lurid and bloodthirsty posters were displayed in front of the nickelodeon, no matter what was being shown inside. The posters remained until weather conditions, and not the program, demanded a change. It was these lurid posters that had much to do with the reformers' objection to motion picture entertainment. They did not see the photoplays. The posters were the basis of their attack.

These lurid posters displayed in front of the nickelodeon represented the average advertising effort. There was no marquee, no supply of lobby photos. All available space in the lobby was cluttered up with peanut stands, candy stands, and weighing machines. The daring exhibitor occasionally invested two or even three dollars in throw-aways made by the local printer.

In 1910, small bulletins of five by eight pages carrying cut illustrations and copy were issued to exhibitors with feature photoplays. Then exhibitors started house programs and announcements. Thus was their first attempt to have the

advertising message carried into the homes of motion picture patrons.

Lithographs.

The true-to-film one sheet was originated by the Motion Picture Patents Company in 1909. Then producers supplied one style of one sheet for each one reel release.

In 1912, the first press sheet was prepared. This was for "Quo Vadis" and consisted of about twenty pages, prepared like the present day press sheet in text, but lacking illustrative material and not carrying exploitation suggestions. This press sheet was prepared and sold for five dollars a copy by private interests and not by the distributor. It reached a very high sale and emphasized how badly the exhibitors needed advertising assistance.

Newspapers.

Prior to 1916, newspaper advertising was very meagre. Cuts were not supplied by producers, and the exhibitors could not afford staff artists, so that the exhibitor who could afford newspaper advertising usually placed no more than four inches. The throwaway program was then a better investment. These took various shapes and styles, from the vest pocket card to the four page daily newspaper, carrying local advertising to defray the cost.

Then came a gradual improvement in theatre fronts. Simple marquees were built. Display frames replaced the old wooden boards. Stock paper was displayed reading "Always a good show" and "20 degrees cooler inside." Home-made decorations and displays were attempted. But the lobby was still cluttered up with stands and machines; and was usually a striking example of how not to advertise.

When two reelers were succeeded by five reelers, advertising advanced accordingly. Longer subjects offered better-developed stories and provided the exhibitor with something that he could really play up in advertising. It was no longer a case of being forced to announce "Moving Pictures tonight" or "pictures that move." The filming of well-known books and plays made it possible to announce well-known subjects.

People were beginning to come to the motion picture theatre in an attitude of mind with which they visited the stock company legitimate theatres. Exhibitors were persuading newspaper editors to carry stories about the motion picture on the amusement pages. Such stories added a certain dignity to the photoplay and made it recognized as a companion to legitimate theatre productions. These stories were placed at first as a concession to theatre advertising. It was then agreed that they had little reader interest. But as stars became better known, and important productions were released, there developed a reader interest which justified allotting space for these stories. Another influence for building theatre patronage was thus permanently established.

Admission Price.

Better productions justified higher admission prices. Increased receipts and the possibilities of appealing to wider patronage made advertising more important. Greater advertising expenditure was justified. In earlier days, if an exhibitor spent an extra \$10, it meant that he required more than 200 extra patrons at five cents admission to justify the expense. But with the admission price raised to twenty cents, 200 extra patrons meant a \$40 increase. This was worth striving for. There was an attempt at more intensive, more efficient and more varied advertising. Exhibitors were not trained advertisers, but they made a sincere effort to improve by studying the trade paper suggestions. As theatres grew larger, exhibitors became really important figures in their communities. began to take a part in community activity. There were free matinees for inmates of institutions, school contests, holiday programs at the theatres and a general attempt to develop good will. This important influence for building theatre patronage also helped to discourage unfavorable legislation.

The years before 1915 might be called the "Period of Free-Lance Exploitation." Each exhibitor relied upon his own ingenuity and worked without the help of experts. Many advertising activities were copied from the circus campaigns; for instance, the blind man stunt, the jackass stunt, peep-hole stunts, mystery stunts and others. Circus ideas were tried by

individual exhibitors, and stopped right there, because there was little exchange of ideas and meagre advertising assistance from producers. Exhibitors with mechanical ability devised animated lobby displays and street ballyhoos.

With the advent of five reelers, three sheets were available and cut-outs for lobby displays became generally used. This practice was carried farther. Built-in-fronts began to be generally used. They gave a "circus atmosphere" to the motion picture theatre at this time. Star personalities were emphasized—fan mail developed tremendously. The personal appearance of stars was encouraged. Rubber stamped autographed star photographs were very popular. Impersonation contests based on star popularity were common. Amateur night, the country store, lotteries of every kind, farmers' matinees, school contests and free ticket prizes were generally used to build patronage.

When mat service and cuts were supplied by distributors, press sheets became the main guidance for exhibitor advertising. The crude newspaper advertisements, which had been little more than announcements, began to improve. Because motion picture theatres could afford to purchase more newspaper advertising space than the average legitimate theatres, an impression of importance was created in the minds of readers and also of newspaper editors. And it was generally felt that the motion picture theatre had left the class of the museum and the circus. It represented a more stable and more dignified type of entertainment.

Exploiteers.

The period from the fall of 1915 to 1920 marked the most striking advance in advertising. In 1915, came the Paramount release "The Miracle Man." The quality of this production justified higher rentals. But exhibitors did not admit that increase in receipts to justify the rentals asked were possible. It was decided to assist exhibitors in their advertising campaigns for this production. Paramount as the distributing company, engaged a number of dramatic press agents, newspapermen and publicity experts organized in the first Department of Exploitation. Exploiteers were sent around the

country to give a practical demonstration of how exceptional photoplays could be advertised intensively to increase receipts. These exploiteers might be called the missionaries of intensive advertising.

The average exhibitor could not then execute an intensive campaign without such assistance. He lacked experience. He lacked confidence. He was too busy with other details of management to devote sufficient time to advertising intensively. In some cases he had persuaded himself that receipts could not be increased beyond a certain figure no matter what might be done. The exploiteers obtained results for "The Miracle Man" that exceeded every expectation.

Then they devoted themselves to other Paramount releases. They had a three-fold duty—to win the exhibitor's confidence, to persuade him that intensive advertising was justified, to develop confidence in merchants and newspapermen so that they would take up different forms of co-operative advertising with the motion picture theatre. Due to the efforts of the exploiteers, window displays were secured from merchants where hitherto such displays were unknown. Merchants arranged special sales for articles that tied-in with the photoplay advertised at the theatre. They also distributed novelties and souvenirs. The many forms of co-operative advertising with merchants, which are now so familiar to the trade, were first introduced through the efforts of the exploiteers.

Results for the merchant from co-operative advertising were so gratifying that they not only welcomed possibilities for further co-operation but suggested new practices. For instance, heralds were distributed in packages, milk bottle hangers were used, printed laundry shirt boards were adopted, and many other ingenious methods of carrying the theatre's advertising message to the public were either suggested by merchants or approved by them when suggested by managers. The newspaper executives, due to the persuasiveness and the experienced approach of the exploiteers, accepted the suggested circulation building contests in conjunction with the motion picture theatres. There were children and newsboy matinees sponsored by the newspapers, essay contests with theatre tickets as prizes, co-operative newspaper advertising pages, safe-driving contests,

and contests of every kind for which theatre tickets were the prizes. The newspaper hoped for increased circulation because of the interest in such activities, and the theatre received publicity that was hitherto unthought of. More "readers" were carried on the amusement pages. The experienced exploiteers knew how to prepare copy for newspapers and knew what arguments would convince editors to accept them. They had more time to give to this subject than the busy exhibitor, and by experience they knew what best to use.

They taught exhibitors how to make shadow boxes and other displays. Because the exploiteers traveled from town to town, they could pick up ideas and give other exhibitors the benefit of their wider knowledge. Lobby displays improved. Advertising of every kind became more effective. Even though advertising was more intensive, it was markedly improved in tone. There were fewer wild statements, less buncombe, better reasoned copy and a more reliable air about it. It became more varied because fresh ideas were circulated. Selling points were more carefully selected. Appeals were less vague.

The year 1920 marked the end of the exploiteers service as an indispensable factor. Of course, the exploiteer continued to function. Other companies had sent their men into the field to do for their productions what had been done for Paramount productions. But in a way the exploiteer had served his main purpose. He had taught the exhibitor what was possible in receipts when skillful and intensive advertising were introduced. Exhibitors had been taught to think in terms of showmanship. Methods and practices were explained that had not been generally understood before. The training period was over, and exhibitors could now rely on their own resources with more confidence and with a fund of helpful ideas. They had had intimate guidance. Hereafter, instruction could be carried on through printed mediums sent from the office of distributors.

Recent Changes.

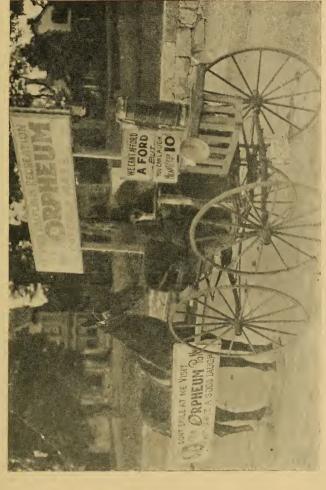
In more recent years, the trend of motion picture theatre advertising has been towards dignity and a more efficient use of a greater number of mediums. Waste has been less prevalent. Co-ooperative advertising with national manufacturers is arranged on a national basis, so that local retailers have available from their own manufacturers dealer helps that will make the tie-up with the local theatre more effective. Distributors supply advertising materials for theatres in a variety and with a degree of excellence that was hitherto never dreamed of.

Newspaper advertising for motion picture theatres is closer to the standards generally recognized by other businesses. Proof of the striking improvement is evident from a comparison between the amusement page of five years ago and that of today. The national advertising of producers in the national magazines is of such a high grade, that theatres are benefited considerably by their association with it. Fan magazines have reached a tremendous circulation, and their issues are merchandising motion picture entertainment with a wholesale appeal. Theatre lobbies look less like circus side-shows and more like the show windows of permanent institutions. Amusement page stories are losing the tone of bombast and exaggeration. Reliability in advertising is becoming more and more prevalent.

The Institution.

But the most striking change that is now under way is the emphasis placed on advertising the theatre as an institution. Formerly the emphasis was given almost entirely to the program. The attempt was made to attract as many patrons as possible for a particular program with little thought to permanent patronage. It is now generally realized that if patronage is built on the program only, when the program changes, little remains as the result of the advertising expenditure. Besides, there is often very little to choose between two competitive programs, so it is apparent that the emphasis of the advertising should be placed on something else, namely, the theatre as an institution of entertainment. Exceptional photoplays cannot be expected regularly. There must be known values to attract patronage when the program is inferior.

The habit of regular attendance at a theatre, irrespective of the feature photoplay on the program, is the aim of advertising now.



ONE OF THE PIONEER PERAMBULATORS—"THE AUTOGOBILE"

Designed for Chaplin comedies and originated about 1913 by a New England exhibitor.



The theatre itself is an attraction. Perfected personnel, service, seating comfort, improved ventilation, decorations, music, and many appliances and up-to-date equipment, are all helping to build theatre patronage, irrespective of motion picture programs. There is much that the modern motion picture theatre can emphasize in advertising, besides the program, in order to build patronage.

Conclusion.

Motion picture theatre advertising has had a remarkable development. There was a time when practically no advertising was used, and the novelty "pictures that move," irregardless of what the picture was, attracted patrons. Then came well-known photoplay subjects with dramatic appeal and well-known stars. Here was material that could be advertised. Now, the mediums of advertising used by the motion picture theatre are more varied than those used regularly for any other product advertised. The subjects which attract theatre patronage are not only the stars and the photoplay, but the theatre itself, as an institution of entertainment.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEATRE AS AN INSTITUTION

O theatre should depend for patronage exclusively upon the program which is booked. Programs come and go. The theatre alone remains. A motion picture theatre offers 52, or 104, or 156 or more programs a year. If the program alone is relied upon for patronage, if the program alone is advertised, then every time the program changes, the theatre is just where it was before any advertising expenditure was incurred. No permanent business builder has been established. The permanent business builder, irrespective of any particular program, is the theatre as an institution.

Practically every detail of theatre operation can be an influence for building patronage. Do not confine building theatre patronage to the programs. Consider every detail of your operation as an influence that builds patronage. Supervise every detail from that viewpoint. Bring to the attention of potential patrons other things besides the program. Because the theatre remains while programs come and go, develop your theatre's reputation as something with permanent influence.

At a time when the motion picture theatre was a seemingly temporary enterprise, when equipment, service, lighting and other details of operation were not worthy of consideration or mention, it was natural that the program alone was relied upon for patronage. Even to-day when the program is exceptional, the program primarily will be responsible for business.

But exceptional programs are relatively rare. Regular attendance must be built with other things which go to make the theatre an institution. They include every detail of operation—admission price, location, accessibility, seating comforts, projection, music, personnel, ventilation, patron conveniences, starting hours, program management no matter what the program is, distinctive novelties of every kind. The theatre as an institution, is the permanent factor that makes regular patrons. When there is little to choose between the entertainment values

of programs at competitive theatres, patrons attend one theatre rather than another because of its institutional reputation.

Meaning.

The word "institution" has such an imposing sound that it seems applicable only to the big metropolitan de luxe theatres. Such is not the case. Practically every theatre can be established as an institution. Size is not the determining factor. It is well to realize that less than 800 theatres in the country seat over 1,750. Hotels of every size have been established as institutions. One of the hotel trade papers recently commended a small 25-room hotel in a town of 2,000 population for the distinctive quality of its operation, which earned for it an institutional reputation. Theatres of 800 seats with 2,000 and 3,000 seat competitors have made and kept patronage because of their institutional appeal.

Price of admission is not the determining factor. Not over 100 motion picture theatres in the country have an admission of over eighty-five cents. There is not so much difference between the lowest admission price of the higher class theatres and the top admission price of others. The average admission price for motion picture theatres now is about thirty cents. Admission price sets no limits to the possibilities of institutional appeal. This is evident from the reputation of cheap price stores in every business. Nor is expensive equipment alone responsible for institutional appeal. You can judge a theatre or a hotel by its equipment alone, just about as much as you can judge a man by his clothes. There must be something more.

Establish your theatre as an institution.

What does this mean?

First consider establishments with institutional appeal in any other business. The institutional appeal is something quite distinct from what is actually sold.

Certain hotels, certain clubs, certain restaurants, certain department stores have institutional appeal. This appeal is based upon "something extra" which goes along with the sale of a product and yet is not the product sold. In some cases, the institution is sought out before any decision is made about

purchasing a definite article. Consider the department store. Because of certain institutional factors, the purchase of the very same article at the very same price is made at one department store rather than at another. Why? It may be the convenience of location. It may be the method of wrapping. It may be speedy delivery. It may be employees' cheerful service, willingness to oblige, interest in the customer's welfare, patience and thoroughness. It may be any one of a hundred things, all of which are different from the quality and the price of the article purchased. One prominent department store has listed over 1,000 details of operation which influence customers' opinion of the institution.

Other establishments which sell the same products year in and year out appreciate the importance of institutional appeal. It is even more important for the theatre whose product—the program—changes weekly, and in some cases daily. Other establishments can expect return trade to purchase the same article again.

But when the program is changed, the theatre is selling another program, so return trade cannot be expected for the same article. Return trade comes because of the institution.

Regular Patronage.

The theatre that depends entirely upon drop-in trade or transient trade is rare. Such a theatre must rely upon the program alone because regular patrons are not possible. But the great majority of theaters depend upon regular patronage. Regular patrons are the surest guarantee of a theatre's prosperity. The manager who has built up a fixed clientele—regular patrons who can always be counted on—and then by skillful merchandising continues to make new regular patrons while he keeps the old, is headed straight for success. How many of your patrons come because they prefer your theatre as an institution? How many come only when the program is exceptionally good? What can be done at your theatre to increase its institutional appeal?

The manager should strive to make his theatre something that is more than "just a theatre." The theatre, independent of any program, can be attractive and friendly, it can be disagreeable and unfriendly, or it can be simply negative and "just a theatre." People have said of some theatres, "I wouldn't go there if the best photoplay ever produced was being shown." It has been said of other theatres, "I go there only when an especially fine picture is booked." It has been said of other theatres, "I go there regularly, no matter what the program is, because I like the theatre. It is friendly. It has institutional appeal."

Distinctive Features.

Because the program alone is not the only possible business builder, the manager should go over other details of operation regularly and improve those which might develop regular patrons. He should add little refinements and conveniences for patrons which are within the budget of the theatre. Then he should bring to the attention of patrons his distinctive institutional features. Patrons may not notice them otherwise. Advertise everything which will help to make regular patrons, and sell it hard. Selling the program alone develops the habit of "shopping for entertainment" and consequently the theatre gets patronage only when the program seems exceptional.

The Theatre Name.

The institutional appeal of the theatre is built around the theatre name. The name recalls the institution. The name can be just a tag or it can be something distinctive. Local names mean more than others, because the community has more definite associations clustered around the local name. It often awakens pride. Usually it is more personable and familiar. The desirable theatre name is short, harmonious in sound, easy to pronounce, easy to remember, easy to write, easy to print, suggestive of entertainment, distinctive, and difficult for competitors to imitate without legal difficulty. A name of six or seven letters and of no more than two syllables is preferable. Careless choice of a theatre name can cause many inconveniences. There are theatre names of four syllables which make it practically impossible to use effectively small space newspaper advertisements. There are names in use which are not easily pronounced. Rather than risk a mistake

in pronunciation people talk about another theatre. Why are names like Strand, Star, State and Gem so often adopted when local names are available which would be more effective? Once the theatre name is adopted it should be kept. Around the name is built the theatre's reputation. When a house has been a distinct failure, and its reputation is a detriment, and it is taken over by new management, it is advisable to change the theatre name and build around the new name a new reputation.

Theatre Name Contest.

The selection of the theatre name can be made a matter of community interest. A contest can be conducted with a substantial prize for the name submitted that is adopted by the management. Newspaper publicity for such a contest can call attention to the institutional features of the theatre. Because of the contest, when a name is finally selected, it makes a deeper impression, is more easily recognizable, is considered as a local product in which the people have had a share. Some clever managers have opened a new theatre as "The theatre without a name" and used no other name during a contest which was conducted under the auspices of a local newspaper for the selection of the most appropriate name. The novelty of this temporary title drew almost as much attention to the theatre as the contest. The contest required that with each name submitted must come a 200 word explanation of why the name was appropriate. This gave the newspaper interesting material to run in connection with the contest. Thus, for over a month the theatre was kept before the public. When the name was finally chosen it was discussed and thus firmly established. How much better is this than just picking a name haphazardly and tagging it on the theatre as though it were of little significance?

Theatre Name Lettering.

A distinctive lettering should be adopted for the theatre name. This makes the theatre name more recognizable. Once distinctive lettering is adopted it should not be changed. Too many theatre advertisements have a new style of lettering for the theatre name about every other month. Consider how nationally advertised products maintain the same distinctive lettering without change. This helps to identify the name. A distinctive design and a distinctive border also help to identify the name and make it more easily recognizable. It is well to combine a design with the name because when the lettering cannot be read at a distance the design is recognizable. Consider in this connection the recognizable designs adopted by Ford, Chevrolet, United Cigar Stores, General Electric, Keen-Kutter, etc.

Theatre Slogan.

The purpose of a slogan is to put in a simple, appropriate. impressive way the message of the institution. The slogan should focus attention on a distinctive feature of the theatre which is not mentioned by competitive theatres, so as to distinguish it. A slogan should be brief. Its purpose is to remind rather than tell or explain. It should not be too general. For instance the slogans "Home of Motion Pictures." "Palace of Entertainment," "Where the Best Photoplays Are Shown," etc., are not effective. The slogan should not exaggerate. It need not be centered on the program or the trademark of productions shown. However, when a theatre is assured of the product of a leading producer, the name of that product could be used in the slogan to good advantage. For instance, "The Home of Paramount Pictures," or "Where Fox Photoplays Show," etc. Slogans should be selected for permanent use. If the product around which the theatre slogan is built is no longer available, a new slogan should be found. In this way the theatre which later books the product has the advantage of the product slogan advertising used by the theatre which first had the product. Consider such nationally familiar slogans as "Say it with flowers," "Eventually, why not now," "Good to the last drop," "If it's made of wood, we have it," "When you think of shoes, think of Smiths," etc.

Theatre Location.

When a new theatre opens, its location should be definitely fixed in the minds of people. All advertising should carry

mention of the location until it becomes well known. Some managers make it a practice to circularize regularly, calling attention to the theatre location and transportation facilities for reaching it from different sections of the city. Mileage signs on the roads mentioning the theatre name, and time signs at trolley transfer points stating the time it takes to reach the theatre, help to establish location. Theatres that cater to outof-town trade should include the theatre location in advertising intended for such patrons. For instance, in hotel lobbies where strangers in town might read your poster, list the location of your theatre, and something about its proximity, general direction or transit facilities for reaching If your theatre is near a prominent market or large department store, remind the buyers there of its proximity. Very often, the fact that persons are in the neighborhood might bring them to the theatre if they are reminded that it is near-by.

Merchant co-operation has been used to make a theatre location better known. Take the name "Star Theatre" for example. An enterprising manager persuaded merchants on the same street with the Star Theatre to use the name "Star" for their stores. So there was "The Star Bakery," "The Star Drug Store," "The Star Market." The street became known as the "Star Theatre Block." Merchant advertising carried lines like "The Star Bakery on Star Theatre Block," and "The Stationery Store across from the Star Theatre." The repetition of such advertising not only fixed the theatre's location, but mention of the name "Star" served as a reminder of the theatre.

The manager is so close to his theatre that he does not always realize that there are many patrons who do not know where the theatre is located. There are many more who do not know how close they are to it when shopping. If you can bring shoppers over to the lobby—your show window—by some announcement, there is a chance of selling them tickets with your lobby display. Your efforts are wasted trying to sell people the idea of seeing a certain program, and then failing to have your theatre location so well known that they can reach it readily.

Community Contact.

No institution can be established with a "public-bedamned" policy. Public service to-day is indispensable. Service is not limited to giving only what is paid for, and no more. The theatre manager especially must make evident his willingness to co-operate for the welfare of the community. The theatre's reputation in the community depends in part upon the public spirit manifested by the manager. It is not enough to be present at Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and Advertising Club meetings, or to make an occasional contribution or deliver a "pep" talk on the community's opportunities for development. The manager must be alert to co-operate with clubs and societies and churches. Perhaps the theatre could be loaned for a public meeting. Perhaps the proceeds of a performance could be donated to a worthy cause. Perhaps the commission on ticket sales through co-operating parties could be donated. One theatre manager—a Jew in a Catholic community-made many friends and established his theatre as an institution by donating his theatre for Sunday services, while the Catholic Chuch was being repaired following a fire.

Of course, managers receive some requests for co-operation that are unreasonable. Such cases should be handled diplomatically. A tactless refusal can make life-long enemies. On the other hand, be careful not to make a concession which can be taken as a precedent and open the way to many similar requests. Be careful not to show favoritism to a particular clique, or creed, or political group. It is just as bad from the business viewpoint to say "Yes" too often as it is to say "No" always. If some merchants gave away their merchandise as freely as managers give away theatre passes they would soon fail. The very nature of the theatre's position in the community requires not unbusinesslike over-generosity, but fair and common sense co-operation.

The theatre ranks with the church and the school as an influence for good. It contributes to the welfare of the community, because wholesome recreation is indispensable. The industry as a whole depends upon the theatre manager to

develop respect for it locally. He is in immediate contact with the public. His contact with the community can be such that his own theatre will become known as a local institution of which the community is proud. Besides, the friendly attitude of the public towards the entire motion picture industry can be fostered by the tactful manager.

Good-Will.

One of the assets of any business institution is good-will. Though intangible, it is very real. A habit of coming to a particular institution rather than elsewhere, because of satisfaction with past services or confidence in the product and the values offered, is good-will. But as far as the theatre is concerned, good-will does not depend upon the merchandise and the prices offered, because programs alone are generally looked upon as the theatre's product and programs are a changing factor. Institutions of another business sell the same product day in and day out. For them quality of the product and its price are important.

Good-will for the theatre is determined by every detail of operation, from the personality of the manager and his reputation in the community, right down to the way the page boy opens the exit door and bids a patron "Good night." It is developed over a period of time, not over-night. It sells tickets at times when special productions and outstanding bargain programs are not offered. Good-will is one of the strongest assets of the showman, because public confidence in his statements is necessary if his advertising is to get results. One misrepresentation, one failure to keep faith with the public, will weaken every future advertising statement. When the public ceases to believe the advertising of a theatre, it is time to change the manager or close the theatre.

The influence for building theatre patronage is not limited to the programs. Where a manager believes that it is, many opportunities will be overlooked. But the manager who uses every opportunity to strengthen the institutional appeal of his theatre, and supervises every detail of operation with an eye to its institutional influence, will build theatre patronage on a sound basis.

CHAPTER V

THE MANAGER

IT is for the manager to control every detail of operation, to choose and train capable assistants, to inspire them with loyalty and enthusiasm, to sell his institution to the public and to show a profit which justifies the investment involved.

Theatres are operated for profit. Profit is the objective which should be kept in mind in every detail of operation. Profit depends on two things—increasing receipts, and cutting down expenses. The manager, who in his attempt to increase receipts, neglects the expenses involved, is not efficient. Nor is that manager efficient, who, in his attempts to cut expenses, cuts to the point where receipts suffer. It is bad business to spend ten dollars to add eight dollars to the receipts. But it is just as bad to cut ten dollars out of expenses and so lose fifteen dollars in receipts that otherwise would be certain and could be secured in no other way. To increase receipts and to cut unnecessary expense to the point where receipts are not affected, involves a combination of what is called showmanship and good business sense. One without the other does not suffice.

To supervise every detail of operation efficiently, the manager requires some knowledge of a wide variety of subjects. His knowledge should cover the following: The product which he is merchandising, the public to whom he sells, the theatre for whose operation he is responsible. All three are equally important. Insufficient knowledge of any one will hamper efficiency.

Knowledge.

Proper operation of the theatre requires some knowledge of ventilation, advertising, fire prevention, music, lighting, equipment maintenance, projection, accounting, house-cleaning and business management. At every turn, the manager can learn from modern business much that he can apply to his own work. Because the product that he sells is constantly changing, he must increase his knowledge of that product just as constantly from the many sources of information that are available.

Knowledge of people demands that life itself be his textbook. He is studying life through the spectacles of the showman, noticing in it those changing fads and fancies just as well as the basic, unchanging qualities of human nature that have a bearing on his work.

The capable theatre manager must have a many-sided nature. He should never feel satisfied that there is nothing more to learn. He should never slip into a rut with the expression "Let well enough alone." There is nothing that requires more hard thinking and more hard work for success. Efforts must be constantly renewed. It is not a case of intensively building something which when once built will stand without further effort. The best established theatre business will slip away when the efforts which built it up cease. When the theatre manager becomes just a janitor or just a house-cleaner with the feeling that business builds itself, more active showmanship by a competitor will take away patrons. If there is no theatre competition, other amusements will attract the public. There is no substitute for the hard-working, hard-thinking showman.

Representative Citizen.

The motion picture theatre manager should be a representative citizen. He should be a showman. He should be a keen business man.

As a representative citizen, personality rather than technical skill is important. It is the manager's personality that gives a theatre its personality. Every detail of operation reflects the character of the manager responsible for it. His ranking as a representative citizen wins respect from the community for his institution. Its opinion of the manager shapes its opinion of his theatre.

The theatre manager is no longer a business outcast. He takes his place shoulder to shoulder with other business men of the community. He can approach them with confidence

because they are favorably inclined. They have reason to be. Business men realize that the theatre keeps the community active at night and helps to bring customers to the stores in the neighborhood. The well-managed theatre is an evidence of the community's progressiveness. In towns where the theatre was so deficient in operation that people traveled to nearby towns for their entertainment, merchants have taken action to improve theatre operation. They realize its value to them. In some cases, these merchants have helped finance another theatre because of the advantages to them of a really well operated theatre. Storekeepers realize that co-operative advertising with the theatre promotes sales of their products. Even educational leaders appreciate the fact that a well operated theatre is a distinct benefit to the community. Civic welfare clubs realize that the theatre can promote the welfare of the community. Parents realize that the theatre protects their children by saving them from street influences that are harmful

Consequently, the theatre manager has no handicap to overcome. Public opinion is in his favor. If he fails, the fault lies with him, and not with the type of work in which he is engaged.

Acquaintances.

The personal acquaintance of the manager cannot be too He should know and be known to merchants, extensive. bankers, newspapermen, hotel managers, political leaders and others who are important factors in the community, as well as known to his patrons. The theatre manager must be democratic and take an active part in every movement which promotes community welfare. There is practically no phase of community life in which he should not have some interest. The more he is recognized as interested in the welfare of the community, the better for his theatre. As a local "booster" he should rank with the loudest. If he holds himself aloof and talks of other communities glowingly, while criticising local conditions, his theatre will suffer. Every community, to those who live there, is considered "the best place in the world." The sooner the manager makes it evident that he also thinks so, the

better. A manager took over the theatre in a mid-western city after coming from Broadway. He was a capable manager except that he could not forget Broadway. He told the "home-town folks" loudly and repeatedly what was the matter with the town which had always seemed quite perfect to them. They proved how much they disagreed by the way they avoided that manager's theatre.

Theatre attendance often depends upon respect and friendliness. The manager's personality and the community opinion of him will always influence the sale of tickets. This may not be so true of the big theatre in the metropolitan city, but it is true elsewhere. The manager is the theatre host and the patrons are his guests.

The manager should spend as much time on the floor and in the lobby as possible. His smile and greeting helps make a theatre visit pleasureable. Every lost opportunity of contact with patrons is a lost opportunity to build patronage. A courteous but not too demonstrative welcome is always appreciated. The theatre manager has no more reason to be shut up in his office than a hotel manager. Both must be personal greeters. The very sight of the manager is an evidence of his interest in the patrons' welfare. A cheery "Good night. Come again" from the manager to departing patrons often makes up for a program that did not entirely satisfy.

Contact.

Contact with patrons gives the opportunity of learning the likes and dislikes of patrons. Their preference for stars and types of photoplays, and their praise and complaints concerning details of operation, are all valuable information. The better the manager understands what his patrons want and what they do not want, the better he can serve them. If the manager is not available to a patron with a complaint, that patron goes off with a grievance. The grievance is not only remembered, but discussed with friends. Patronage is affected. All this would have been avoided, if the manager were there in the first place to listen and smooth out the trouble. It is quite natural to forget a complaint that has been satisfactorily explained, and human to remember a grievance when an usher

informs the aggrieved patron that "The manager is not around."

The manager in his rounds of the theatre finds many opportunities for little courtesies, acts of thoughtfulness and considertion. Patrons notice and discuss such things.

Parents worry less about the attendance of their children at a theatre where they know the manager is present to keep order, standing by ready for an emergency. Women patrons feel safer at such a theatre. The troublesome element—rowdies—avoid the theatre where the manager is always present to check what might lead to the annoyance of others.

It has been said that the personality of the manager in smaller theatres can be responsible for 50% of the patronage. It is hard to determine in actual figures the result of his influence. But it is certainly not negligible.

The more the manager shows his interest in patrons, the more they will show their interest in his theatre. They will regard it as "their theatre." If the manager knows patrons by name and can greet them by name, with a friendly inquiry about the family or business or some point of common interest, he makes the attendance not a business transaction, but a social pleasure for the patron.

Reputation.

The personal reputation of the manager must be above reproach. Questionable habits and questionable associates hurt the theatre. Gossip about late hours and rumors of scandal connected with the manager's name involve the theatre. Because the manager is the host, patrons do not want to be entertained by one whom they would not welcome into their own homes. If the manager is a churchgoer he will find that this promotes the welfare of the theatre. If he is married, it is expected that his wife will enter into the social activities of the community. Emergencies arise when the good-will of influential members of the community is invaluable. Many a legislative problem was brought to a satisfactory conclusion for the theatre because the manager who represented its case was respected. Theatres have suffered by legislation because

the manager's reputation determined an unfavorable attitude towards the theatre.

The theatre manager can be guided by much of the following which is taken from the "Hotel Manager's Creed":

I am manager of a hotel—a community center where men, women and children from every station in society congregate for food, shelter and entertainment.

I shall endeavor to make my hotel worthy as a clearing house for all civic, social and business events held in my city.

I accept the responsibility of membership in my association of hotel men, and acknowledge its obligation to exert every energy to safeguard the Health, Comfort and Safety of the Public, my Patrons and my Employees.

I will endeavor to conduct my hotel in such an upright and wholesome manner that it will assist in raising the standards of hotel keeping in this state and nation, to a place of honor among the useful and respected industries.

I will take an active part in the affairs of my town, and will lend my moral, physical and financial support to any forward movement.

I will assist the officials in the health department of this state, and those intrusted with the inspection of lands and buildings, and meet all of the requirements of the state laws to the best of my ability.

I will defend the good name of a hotel whenever I may hear it assailed.

I will use all honorable means to advance the interests of my association and the hotel business in general, and will work for better understanding and greater co-operation between the Hotel, its Community, its Patrons and its Employees.

The Showman.

What is showmanship?

The dictionary does not give a definition. The successful theatres of the country are a practical example. And yet

showmanship is not confined alone to selling entertainment. Politics has its showmen. Journalism has its showmen. Big department stores have their showmen. The fruit store at the corner may be an evidence of showmanship.

Successful theatres are a practical example of showman-ship. Yet the successful theatre to-day, without the slightest change in its operation may be a failure to-morrow, and the word "showmanship" which was used to explain success becomes "lack of showmanship" to explain the failure. Every attempt to explain showmanship includes the words originality or ingenuity or novelty. It implies expressing ideas in a new way or doing things as they were never done before. It understands what the public wants at the time, and gives the public what it wants, as it wants it. But more than that, it means making the public want what you, as the manager, have to offer, giving it the way it is wanted, changing to a new way before your patrons tire of the old.

If human nature were always and everywhere the same and unchanged, there would be less need of showmanship.

As it is, the showman should know human nature not by theory, but by actual contact. Because human nature is so changeable, the showman should be an opportunist, alert to change quickly to meet a change in mood, and capitalize on a new fad or popular fancy. The last place you need look for a showman is in a rut. There is no rut of showman-ship.

The manager, as a showman, should be as good a "greeter" as the hotel clerk, a better salesman than the commercial traveler, as good a mixer as the ward politician—yet possess the dignity that commands the respect of the conservative. He ought to be inventive, resourceful, tactful, and above all, possess innate good sense that directs his activities within the bounds of public decency.

Because the product he sells is constantly changing, he must advertise continuously and in such a way that he presents that phase of his product which will appeal most at that time to potential customers. But his advertising should not be confined to routine methods. It is most effective when he utilizes

the unusual, when he ties it in with something of live interest at the moment. So it is he capitalizes on already awakened interests or deliberately stimulates an interest which he can guide to his own advantage.

Showmanship has been called genius. Yet genius is not much more than a capacity for hard work at work that is liked. The manager who does not like his work so that he dreams of it at night, will not be a showman. If he does not get real pleasure from selling smiles and romance, adventure, happiness, thrills, laughs—making people happy—with a product that appeals directly to the heart and imagination of people—then showmanship is not for him. Real love of the theatre and what it does for people is indispensable. It is real love of the work that drives to efforts which are finally tagged with the word "showmanship."

Is showmanship inherited, or can it be developed, is a question often in dispute. If it is inherited, then love of the work is part of the inheritance. If it can be developed—and it can—then love of the work is the motive.

The Business Man.

There was a time when they spoke of it as "The motion picture game." The word game implied the elements of luck, chance, gamble, haphazard, hit-and-miss operation.

To-day, theatre operation is not a game, but a business that is coolly and calculatingly well-planned. The glamorous side of theatre operation is less prominent in the mind of the manager who is a business man. The manager is a business man with both eyes on profits. Every wasted penny in operation is eliminated when operation is efficient. Friction and duplication is eliminated because they mean waste and waste has no place in business. There is little guesswork. There is less groping in the dark. There are guiding precedents. There are figures and charts for comparisons. There are facts for calculating. There is system. There is planning. There is budgeting. There is the constant effort to check up expenditures and trace their influence right back to the box office. There are surveys that show possibilities, and well-planned activities to achieve them.

Conclusion.

As a business man, the manager can spend money—he can spend time—his time and that of employees—so that the result will mean more for the theatre than any other use of that money or time. He can control and guide every detail of operation so that it exerts its fullest influence in building theatre patronage. For this, he requires a thorough understanding of management.

CHAPTER VI

MANAGEMENT

DUSINESS ability and business principles of management apply in theatre operation. Every business has certain activities peculiar to itself. However, some general principles of management can be applied in every business.

Management is the efficient direction of all the activities involved in the operation of a business enterprise to attain its object. The object of theatre operation is to supply entertainment and service at a consistent profit.

Efficient direction requires organization, and the proper use of time, materials and equipment. Otherwise, there is disorder, duplication of effort, waste of time, waste of money, waste of materials, poor performance—all of which have a bearing on consistent profits.

Efficient direction requires the proper outlining of activities, proper assignment of these activities, definite responsibility, regular supervision.

System.

All this goes to make system. System is not something which grows by itself. It must be built up deliberately. Large enterprises of modern business have their systems of operation planned on a scientific basis. There are experts who specialize in systemizing. The theatre is not so involved in its operation that a practical working system requires any complicated, specialized expert planning. However, some common-sense direction can be suggested.

This direction applies to every theatre, large and small. Large theatres have a recognized head who has a group of assistants, and activities are departmentalized so that every department head is directly responsible for departmentalized work, such as advertising, maintenance, personnel service, auditing, presentations, music, projection, etc. The size of the

theatre determines to what extent details of operation will be departmentalized.

In some smaller theatres the manager himself, sometimes without an assistant, is not only responsible for the supervision but is actually the performer of many activities. Thus the manager of a very small theatre once listed himself "managing director, also operator, janitor, cashier, doorman, usher, stenographer, bill-poster and sign-painter. In this summary, there might have been an attempt at the facetious, but there are cases where it is very near the truth. The point to be made is that even in such a small operation, common-sense practices of management can be applied. Whether the manager directs and supervises the work of others, or whether he actually performs the activity, does not alter the matter. A plan of operation should be determined. This means that activities will be grouped so that a certain routine can be followed.

Standards will be set down so there will be measures of efficiency and some means of determining improvement. Responsibility will be definitely placed and proper authority will be established. As far as possible, emergencies will be eliminated and snap judgments will be less frequent. The same emergencies should not be consistently recurring. When an emergency arises, let some provision be made so that it will not recur. Establish some set method of handling the emergency, so that things will not be done in a slightly different way each time, in a blundering attempt to hit upon the right way. When the right way is clearly established, set a standard or routine method of action. Snap judgments involve waste. Unexpected and unplanned activities make snap judgments necessary. From the very nature of things, theatre management will require many snap judgments. A slightly imperfect decision is to be preferred to an absolutely correct decision which is made too late. But the number of snap judgments can be diminished.

Emergencies.

If proper foresight is used, very many possible emergencies can be listed, and some plan of action determined upon in advance. Go over your operation and list such things as: advertising materials not available, cashier does not arrive on

time, film does not arrive, organist is not on time, projectionist is not on time, lights fail, refunds requested, screen damaged so that it cannot be used, a fire in the booth, a panic cry in a crowded house, disorderly patron, ticket supply exhausted, serious storm hampers theatre attendance, theatre cleaners do not report, strikes, etc.

Other so-called emergencies which happen regularly in small details of operation might be listed, but these are evident to one who analyzes a particular operation.

The point being made is that the disadvantage of any emergencies are limited, if in advance some provision is made to handle the emergencies. Where this provision is made, smooth running of the operation is not affected, there is little waste, and things are righted almost immediately. Where management is not efficient, emergencies are a regular occurrence.

Waste.

Management uses time, materials, money, and equipment. Waste always involves money. Waste is eliminated by proper use.

Time.

The proper use of time is an important essential of good management. Time has a value just as materials, equipment and the money used by management. This means both the time of the manager and the time of employees. In both cases nothing better can be suggested than a schedule of work. Time wasted by the manager and time wasted by the staff, if it amounts only to minutes per day, becomes hours when calculated on a yearly basis. When multiplied by the salary paid per hour, the waste in dollars is considerable even in small operation.

It does not follow that because a man is busy, his time is properly used. The very busy man may be so buried in details that efficiency is lost, and hence there is waste. The very busy man may work in such a disorganized way that there is so much duplication and lost motion that waste results. The very busy man may be giving so much of his time to insignificant details that, even if he is busy, there is waste. If the

manager's office looks as though a cyclone had just passed by, it is evident that, busy as he is, because of such disorder, time will not be used to its full possibilities.

Schedules.

Time can be used properly without any fixed schedule. but when the schedule sets down definitely detailed activities with some indication of sequence which excludes duplication of effort, and with some indication of relative amount of time justified by each activity according to its importance, and with some indication of the hour of the day when such an activity can be best performed, this schedule usually eliminates waste. The same general round of duties confronts you every week. Why not list these activities and determine by a check-up whether or not too much time is given to some, and not enough time to others—whether insignificant work done by one whose time is valuable could be done equally well by someone elsewhether related activities might be grouped so that at one time these related activities could be carried out more efficiently than if they were taken up singly at different times? List such things as staff meetings, fire drill, house inspection, visit to the bank, preview, arranging advertising campaigns, rehearsals, callers, payroll, etc., until your general activities are all before you and then schedule your time for each.

Hobbies.

One general reason for defective system is a manager's devotion to a hobby. Every man has hobbies—things he prefers to do. How he should perform any activity and how much time he should devote, is not determined by his preference.

Preference has no bearing on the matter. We find ourselves giving too much time to what we like to do, because human nature likes self-flattery. Hobbies can be the enemies of system. The manager with a hobby for art-work, may devote too much time to preparing lobby panels and neglect other details. The manager with a hobby for newspaper layout, may devote too much time to polishing up minor details and adding fancy touches, and neglect other work. The manager with a hobby for dipping lamps may give too much time to getting novel tints and neglect other work. A manager too greatly interested in projection, may not only interfere with the work of the projectionist, but spend so much time in the projection room that the rest of the house is neglected. A manager with a hobby for music may ride his hobby so far that other details are not properly supervised. The manager who is interested in developing his theatre staff may give too much time to this detail, and neglect others equally important.

Some details of operation are attractive. Others mean drudgery. Good housekeeping and exacting supervision of the boiler room and the cellar may not be as attractive as addressing the local women's club. Whether the work is attractive or not should not determine the amount of attention that should be given it. Hobbies are dangerous things. Riding a hobby will often carry a man away from other important details which he neglects because he does not like them. Therefore, in arranging your schedule, put aside any notion of preference or any feeling of attractiveness, and face your activities with a cool, business-like attitude.

Your Staff.

Good management everywhere requires that all possible results be gotten from employees. This often involves personality factors and qualities of leadership. Your staff are your assistants. There are two people who think they don't need assistance—one is the "know-it-all," and the other is the monologue artist. The monologue artist is right—he needs no assistance. The "know-it-all" is wrong. Encourage suggestion. Encourage comment. Make every employee feel that he or she has an interest in the theatre. Many a suggestion for an inexpensive remedy, which saved greater expenditure later, has come from the most insignificant member of the theatre staff. No manager can see everything. If he has only seven people on his staff, sixteen eyes are better than two. The manager cannot be everywhere. The staff that is imbued with an interest in the theatre's welfare, and working not for "a boss" but a leader, is a valuable asset. When employees are really interested in an operation, they are not only alert with suggestions, but they are willing to do more with their time.

For instance, the ushers will gladly conduct a "whisper" campaign, or distribute heralds, or help with house maintenance. The cashier will assist with office details and often do her part in an advertising campaign. When away from the theatre she will be anxious to develop patronage. The doorman may come down earlier than is actually required to help build cut-outs and replace lobby boards. The bill-poster will not feel that his duties are limited, but will be glad to help out not only in emergencies, but in other work in which he takes an interest, because his leader, the manager, has developed a certain loyalty to the operation. This applies also to union employees. Union employees, if tactfully handled, may not be clock watchers, and will not carry to ridiculous extremes some petty regulation. They will realize that the welfare of the theatre is their welfare, and will co-operate like the others.

As we said, this is a matter of personality and leadership, and these are not learned by any rule-of-thumb principles. However, this can be suggested—loyalty is developed by consideration and fair dealing. Deception and bunk are useless. Each man, not matter how loyal he is, is justly asking the question, "What is there in it for me?" Loyalty in business is not developed by shouting that the individual must forget himself, but rather by a fair statement of the fact that the more an individual helps the general welfare, the better for the individual. In other words, a natural, selfish attitude is now focused on another goal, even if it still remains selfish. Real service is not secured from ushers by eloquent orations which promise that shortly they will be leaders of the industry. After a few months of such eloquence the ushers naturally doubt the statement, and when they doubt the truth, they lose confidence in the leader; and when they lose confidence in leadership, devotion is impossible. Contented employees are made not by the pay envelope alone. Any salary given by some would not satisfy, because of the surroundings and the relationship that exists. But relatively small salaries have

gotten exceptional results when coupled with tactful, fair, encouraging management. All this is quite compatible with strict and exacting supervision. Standards need not be lowered to permit the entrance of the leadership qualities mentioned.

Use of Materials.

The purchase of supplies and materials is not discussed here because suggestions would be so qualified by varying conditions that they would not be practical. However, there are economies possible, such as seasonal buying. For instance, many a dollar can be saved on the coal bill by the timely contracting for the winter supply. Purchasing in bulk all materials which will be used regularly makes possible another economy. Foresight in noticing needs will make possible purchases in advance rather than at the last minute, and this leads to economies. Lamps are sometimes purchased for theatre use without fullest economies, because catalogues were not properly studied and proper lamps not ordered. For instance, ordering enamel lamps and coated lamps with the intention to dip these for theatre use means waste because such lamps do not keep the dip. Ordering gas-filled lamps for outdoor use when such lamps crack when exposed to rain means waste. Ordering lamps of wrong size and wrong type without carefully considering requirements means waste. Ordering lamps in broken packages, when a discount is possible by ordering the unbroken package, is another instance of waste. Judging lamp efficiency by length of life, means ordering cheaper lamps which are actually more expensive than others. because the current cost and efficiency should have been considered, inasmuch as the real cost of lamps is not judged by replacement cost, but rather by cost per lumen. Ordering lamps of a voltage which is not correct for the voltage of the line on which they will be used means a loss of over 50 per cent in lamp life. Economies such as those indicated here are evident from the study of dealer catalogues.

Power can also be considered material. When chandeliers are kept lighted for theatre cleaning, there is a waste of power which runs into real money. When lamps are kept burning

when illumination is not required, there is waste. When insulation is faulty, there is waste. When carbons are heated for projector use too far in advance, there is waste, both of power and of carbon. When high intensity projection is used where low intensity would get satisfactory results, there is waste. Any manager could go over the daily use of current and heat and find possible economies which would not lessen efficiency.

Effective lighting increases efficiency, decreases spoilage, cuts down accidents, and improves sanitation. If there are dark spots in your cellar or poor lighting where your theatre employees must work, don't be misled by the penny-wise and dollar-foolish policy. Realize that a dark wall when painted can increase illumination 50 per cent. Realize that colored walls painted white can increase illumination about 20 per cent. Realize that dark corners encourage hiding of dirt and dropping of cigarettes, while a white-painted corner in your cellar suggests the opposite.

Salvaging Materials.

Seasonal decoration, stage props, theatre drapes, compo board, stage costumes, are a few of the materials with which economies can be practiced by proper salvage. Usually proper salvage involves careful storing of materials. If drapes are not carefully stored, they may not be found satisfactory for use later. Upson board can be stripped and cut and recut for many uses. In smaller operations, economies like these mean much. Panel boards and advertising materials can be used on reverse sides to save the pennies involved by further purchase. As far as salvaging is concerned, it is evident that this can be carried to extremes. There is just so much room for storage and the manager might use storage space with a rental value of so many dollars per square foot to keep material which might just as well be discarded. If closet space is crowded so that the salvage of some materials will mean very likely the damage of others, the principle of salvage should not be carried to extreme. Like any good principle, this can be carried to extreme, and so we find theatres littered with material whose future use is very questionable. The junk man here would be the suggestion of good management.

Lamps.

So many electric lamps are used in theatres that some kind of an inventory should be kept. A chart arranged according to your requirements would indicate: first, the place where lamps are used; secondly, the size of lamps used; thirdly, dates of installation. This chart would serve to check inventory of lamps on hand and also give some indication of lamp life and serve as a check against dishonesty. The very fact that the date of installation is scratched on a lamp base or lettered on, serves as a reminder to some that stealing would not go unnoticed. Superficially colored lamps should be stored so that surfaces will not be scratched by bases.

Care of Equipment.

The manager should have a detailed and complete inventory of the theatre's equipment. The disappearance of pieces of equipment otherwise becomes quite likely. as care of equipment is concerned, this involves everything from the mechanism in the boiler room to the projectors in the projection room. A schedule of cleaning should be arranged. The life of equipment is shortened and the efficiency of equipment is lessened by neglect in maintenance. Lighting fixtures, for instance, can lose 50 per cent in illumination if dust and dirt are allowed to accumulate. The screen loses in illumination without proper cleaning. All that can happen to projection from neglect in cleaning is evident to anyone who has studied a projector. A small repair in time to seats, carpets, drapes, mats, etc., will save a heavier repair expense later, and perhaps the expense of new equipment. Oil for motors, properly lubricated belts, a screen in the blower room to keep dust from the organ, the oiling of electric fans, the cleaning of flasher boxes, are but a few instances of where care of equipment saves dollars. The uniforms of theatre employees properly hung, regularly cleaned, carefully maintained, will save dollars.

Proper care of equipment involves the use of proper oiling or cleansing materials. The wrong grade of oil can ruin motors

and projectors. The use of the wrong cleansing material for plaster, varnish, brass and glass can be wasteful, no matter how careful the cleaning is. You cannot expect your cleaning staff to know all that should be known for the proper care of drapes, tapestries, carpets and art work, so let your cleaning schedule carry the necessary information.

The Use of Words.

Effective verbal expression in any business requires no application of literary principles. Expression is effective when it gets desired results with a minimum of words. Words can be used in a business-like way and save money, or they can be wasted—and waste money. Telephone conversations, staff memoranda, business letters, personal letters, conversation with patrons, staff meetings, stage announcements, public addresses, are all a part of a manager's day. Wasted words mean the waste of a manager's time, and the waste of the time of others. Wasted words on the telephone may mean that ticket sales were lost because the line was busy. Inarticulate announcements by the theatre staff may mean confusion or waste of time. Vague direction in memoranda may mean confusion, and long-winded memoranda may waste your time and the time of those who must read it. Determine upon a common-sense business use of words. The telephone company will advise you how words can be saved in accepting and giving calls.

You might check up the use of words and then apply just common-sense principles and find that many minutes or even hours per week might be saved with an increase in efficiency and without the waste of time. You don't stand on the marquee and drop lamps on the sidewalk to watch the glitter of the dropping lamp and hear the noise. Don't stand and drop words to watch the glitter and to hear the noise. Both are equally expensive.

Passes.

There should be no such thing as a free theatre pass. Every pass distributed by the theatre should be given in return for some value received. The shoe merchant does not

give away free shoes, and the grocer does not give away free soup. The only thing you have to sell is theatre seats. Passes for a contest, because they develop pride of winning and pride of superiority and because they have made possible some theatre contest which promotes attendance, are not "free passes." The judicious distribution of passes is judicious when no pass is a "free pass." There is always some value involved. It is true that about one out of every five pass-holders will bring friends to the theatre. Therefore, it is advisable to have passes marked "admit one." By repeating pass distribution each week rather than giving a pass indiscriminately for six months or a year's usage, you have the added advantage of getting a constant reminder of expectation and indebtedness. You can often get more with a few passes than you could with a few dollars. Indiscriminate distribution of passes cheapens a theatre. With each pass you distribute, be sure that you get in return value received.

Supervision and Inspection.

System, the proper assignment of duties and of responsibility, the determination of standards and a well-arranged schedule of operation, are not sufficient without supervision and inspection.

Constant vigilance is necessary. Inspection cannot be neglected for long before a noticeable falling-off follows. Theatres cannot run themselves, and employees will not keep to a standard without reminders and encouragement. Supervision by the manager should not be limited to the activities of others. The manager should go over his own work and measure it by some standard, so that he can detect defects and measure improvement.

Obviously, there should be a thorough inspection of the theatre regularly. Detailed inspection is advocated. There should be a thorough inspection before the house opens to make sure that everything is ready for audiences. What this inspection will cover depends upon the type of theatre involved. Before the house is closed there should be a thorough inspection, and a note made of necessary repairs and details to be brought to the attention of the cleaners. During audience

hours, inspection should be made regularly of those places where emergencies might occur.

Inspection does not mean a careless, aimless, roaming about the theatre. A chart should be arranged listing the things to be noted at each critical point. The plan of this chart will depend upon the type of theatre involved. In making your inspection, imagine that the most skillful theatre operator in the country is going around with you to check-up. View your operation through his eyes. Notice what he would notice. Set your standard high. Remember that your patrons are making their own inspection of the theatre while there. Women patrons particularly notice dust, carelessly hung drapes, lights out, torn carpets, dirty glass, unpolished brass and a hundred other neglected details of house cleaning. All these influence their opinion of your theatre.

Do not confine your inspection to those parts of the house which patrons see. Do not have two standards of cleanliness—one for the places seen by patrons and one for the rest of the house. Remember that your employees visit these other places, and untidiness there will make an impression which will be reflected in their work. Ushers coming from an untidy ushers' room will soon show slovenly habits. The untidy projection room is not only a fire hazard, but the atmosphere of carelessness will not be conducive to careful work by the projectionists. It is usually true that the theatre whose cellar is spick and span has a clean lobby, too. Members of the orchestra who come from a carelessly maintained and seldom swept musicians' room may show in their playing traits of carelessness.

The spick-and-span condition of a battleship is none too high a standard to set for your theatre. Inspection not only helps to keep the theatre in a condition that encourages patronage, but it saves equipment. It saves expensive repairs. It is good business.

Staff Inspections.

If the manager in person cannot inspect his theatre thorously as often as is necessary, he should assign different sections to different members of the staff. If staff inspection is doubled up so that one member checks the inspection of another, better results are obtained. Use a chart for such inspections because of the influence it has in calling attention to details and encouraging thoroughness. Staff inspection can cover condition of equipment, ventilation, lighting, proper use of materials, fire hazards, sanitation, accumulation of waste materials, seats, etc. It does not take the usher force long to inspect each seat. Thus splinters, loose arms, noisy seats, loose backs, protruding nails or screws, torn covers, broken hat wires, can be reported in time to save heavy expense. Besides, liability of injury to patrons' clothing is avoided. This inspection by the staff helps to develop morale. It makes employees feel that they have an interest in the theatre. It makes then realize how carefully equipment should be maintained. If a reward is offered for notable efficiency in such inspection, an incentive is added and better results achieved.

Patrons' Suggestions.

Patrons can become a very valuable source of information; therefore, welcome criticism and suggestion. This will bring to your attention many details which might be overlooked. Suggestion boxes in which patrons are invited to drop cards with their suggestions or criticisms will bring out some good ideas. For instance, something like the following can be printed on cards and left where the card can be filled out by patrons:

"To Our Patrons: The management seeks in every way to better its service. We want you to know that you will confer a favor on us by quoting hereon any irregularity, discourtesy, carelessness, inefficiency, or suggest any improvement which comes to your attention. These reports will be treated as strictly confidential and are asked merely to enable us to render more efficient and accurate service. We thank you in advance for your interest."

Friends of the manager can be "planted" at critical points to report what they notice or overhear. Of course, anything like "snooping" is not to be encouraged, because it breaks down morale; but friends possessed of common sense and tact can notice things with a view to constructive criticism, and,

without interfering with the staff, can make helpful suggestions. A new viewpoint and a stranger's opinion will catch details which might be overlooked by one who is too close to familiar routine. Be thankful for criticism. Nothing makes a poorer impression than a stubborn manager's refusal to accept suggestion. There is only one answer to give to the criticism: "Thank you." If the criticism is right, accept it. If it is wrong, you get more by a "Thank you" than you do by any long argument and by alibis.

Conclusion.

The theatre business, like any business, evidently has its own unique, individual business principles. However, like any other business, it should follow certain generally accepted principles of management. These have been indicated here only in broadest outline as suggestions, rather than as machinemade routine. Any business enterprise profits by applying sound principles of management.

CHAPTER VII

PERSONNEL SERVICE AS A SALES AGENT

THE motion picture theatre depends for success very much upon the relation between its employees and the public, and upon the quality of service rendered its patrons.

Theatre tickets are purchased not only because of the entertainment offered by stage and screen. The general efficiency and courtesy of the theatre staff, and distinctive comforts and conveniences at a particular theatre, are an important factor in building patronage. These are not empty ceremonies and pretentious "showing-off." They have a value where the value of every detail of operation is determined—at the box office. They are an evidence of showmanship, as are the selection of a program, or the decorative scheme of the theatre.

The superiority of motion picture theatre service to its patrons over that of legitimate theatres is evident to even the casual observer, and can be favorably compared with the standards of any other business enterprise.

No Exception.

The smaller theatre should be no exception. This is not a matter confined to the de luxe metropolitan theatres simply because at these a larger staff is needed and the display is more striking. A staff of three can be trained to a higher efficiency than a staff of one hundred. In the smaller theatre, the manager can personally do much that in larger theatres must be delegated to others, so the staff should be better trained in the smaller theatre.

Contact of employees with customers or patrons is important in every business, because more is involved than a mere exchange of merchandise and money. At a time when business enterprises were operated on a small scale, the proprietor's personal contact with customers was one of the leading factors of his success. It was the proprietor who greeted

the customer. He personally made the sale. His interest in the customer, his anxiety to please, his understanding of individual preferences and whims, helped to build trade. He injected his personality into every transaction. Friendship and respect was what brought many customers back again.

As establishments became larger and their operation became more involved, the proprietor was forced to devote much of his time to executive work. Supervising the entire enterprise prevented his direct contact with customers. His employees became his personal representatives. They had to show the same interest, the same anxiety to please and the same understanding of individual preferences, as did the proprietor.

Opinions.

It is generally admitted that every contact with customers offers an advertising possibility, or a business building possibility. The customer's opinion of the institution is determined in good part by contact with its employees. It is they who make the personality of the institution. As a rule, they reflect the personality of the proprietor. Much time and thought is given to-day to the selection and training of employees. Modern business has found that the expense and time involved is justified.

No other business can attribute as much importance to personal contact with customers as the motion picture theatre. When theatres were smaller, it was the personality of the manager that often determined success. Now in larger theatres this important work is delegated to the staff, although the more the manager participates the better. The importance of this is evident when you realize what brings people to the theatre. They seek happiness, relaxation, freedom and change from the boredom of daily life. They enter the theatre in an altogether different frame of mind than that with which they enter a store. They do not seek a bargain in the sense that they will shrewdly dicker for prices. They do not carry away any tangible product. They are not trading. They want entertainment.

Entertainment is possible only in an atmosphere of good cheer, of smiles, of courtesy, of hospitality, of friendship. All this depends upon the manager and his staff. The most perfectly equipped theatre is cold and empty without the warm touch of personality.

The Guest.

The patron comes to the theatre as a guest. The manager and his staff are the hosts. Their greeting, their evidences of welcome, their courteous, cordial interest in the patron's welfare should be that of a host for a guest. Hospitality should be evidenced everywhere. It should be simple and gracious. Entertainment is possible only in such an environment. Grouches, frowns, impatience chill the happy spirit of the patron. Surly, careless, dull, sloppy theatre attendants make pleasure impossible. It has been truthfully said that many a patron found fault with a show because an usher had stepped on his foot. The recollection of a grouchy usher or a curt reply or lack of attention will linger in a patron's mind and lend drabness to the program. Business life is often so intense. that there is not much room for smiles and courtesy. That is why they are so much appreciated at the theatre where tired people go for happiness.

Enter your theatre with the same attitude of mind and with the tired feeling of the average patron, and see what an effect smiling, courteous treatment has upon you. Then you will never doubt its importance. It is the spirit of the service, rather than what is actually done, which makes the impression. To get some unlooked-for courtesy, or assistance in an emergency from a theatre attendant gives a pleasurable thrill, because such things elsewhere are all too rare in daily life.

The duties of theatre attendants are sometimes considered only from the viewpoint of selling tickets quickly and efficiently, and handling crowds and filling seats in a way that will be to the theatre's advantage.

If the theatre were a machine, if patrons were just so much baggage to be disposed of by employees, such a view of the matter would be justified. The realization of why people visit the theatre and what depends upon personal attention from

the staff proves that something more is required to build theatre patronage than that alone.

But every theatre is striving to give something distinctive, something that is not offered elsewhere. Such a distinctive feature can be in the form of a manager and theatre employees, who express by their demeanor and their every action the consideration of the perfect host for the welcome guest.

This angle is slighted by those who insist "The show is the thing." True enough, there are some shows so remarkable that they could be enjoyed sitting on a splintered rail in the rain and cold. But such are very rare, and always will be.

Often there is little to choose between the programs of competitive theatres. Then it is that the theatre which offers that "something extra" in service will profit. And even with the most remarkable program, remember that there are many who can enjoy it only in "entertainment environment."

The Staff.

The staff should be carefully selected, carefully trained and diligently supervised. Because every theatre presents a different problem, such details as selecting, training and promoting employees, salary remuneration, floor positions of the staff, reliefs, signal systems, uniforms, hours of work, set phrases for greeting and directing patrons, etc., will not be discussed here. However, there are some general principles that apply everywhere to theatres large and small.

The Patron Is Always Right.

This means that every difference of opinion should be adjusted to the full satisfaction of the patron. A flippant, argumentative, stubborn personality has no place in the theatre. Yielding to the patron's opinion must be done graciously and willingly. The begrudging acceptance of the patron's opinion is not enough.

For instance, the cashier may think that the patron said "Balcony." But after the patron repeats, "I said orchestra," it is not for the cashier to argue or seem displeased. The patron is always right.

The usher may think the patron said "Center aisle." When the patron insists "I said left aisle" the usher must willingly acknowledge that the patron is right. An usher may start down an aisle and later find that the patron slipped into a seat which was preferred to that indicated by the usher. It is not for the usher to glare and show displeasure. He is there to serve.

All this requires patience and restraint. The habit of dealing courteously with patrons is developed only by constant practice. Emergencies arise, especially during rush hours, which require a level head and common sense. Human nature is often unreasonable. But loss of temper, discourtesy and snappy arguments often send patrons away with the firm resolve never to return. The loss of revenue from even a single regular patron becomes considerable over a year.

No Favoritism.

Real service is democratic. Favoritism never passes unnoticed. When the manager selects from the waiting crowd some friend who is given special attention and perhaps brought to a seat ahead of others waiting a longer time, the others have a just cause for grievance. An exception is made, of course, when the very aged and cripples are given special consideration. Such thoughtfulness is generally noticed and commented on. The motion picture theatre should not cater to the privileged few. Neither the manager nor any one else should single out certain patrons for special attention. patrons should be considered equal at the theatre. No matter who the patron is, the fact that he has paid admission is proof enough that he is entitled to every consideration. Any neglect of less fortunate patrons causes resentment which rankles, making the pleasure of entertainment impossible. It is remembered long after the theatre visit. Even wealthier and distinguished patrons pay tribute to service that is thoroughly democratic. Externals are not always evidence of an individual's importance.

There may be a few theatres which cater to a distinct patronage. For instance, in some exclusive resorts, the management may be catering to certain types of patrons and discouraging attendance from others. These are the exception,

and an exceptional policy is justified at such theatres. But in general, democratic service should be the rule. The patronage of influential people can be developed by other methods than those which cause other patrons to feel slighted.

Work Not Amusement.

Employment in a theatre is not to be taken lightly. It is a real job that demands study, practice, accuracy, thoroughness, patience and concentration. It is not an easy thing to work while others play. No member of the staff is there to enjoy the performance and be a part of the audience. Ushers should not feel that their work is attractive simply because they can watch the performance while they work. An usher with one eye on the screen will fail to notice about one-half of the opportunities for service. He will resent interruptions. Usually patrons will serve themselves rather than interfere with a preoccupied usher.

There is always so much to be noticed by the usher, and so many opportunities for wide-awake service, that full attention to duty is necessary. Nor should the manager sit with the audience to enjoy the show. The audience expects him to attend to his business. Besides, no manager can welcome patrons if his mind is centered on the screen.

Team Work.

Not individual effort but team work of the entire staff brings the best results. Team work is based on loyalty and devotion to the welfare of the theatre. Team work depends upon the manager's qualities of leadership. The staff must feel that they are working not for a boss but for a leader. He must convince them first that in bringing happiness to people they are performing a worth-while work—that they have much to do with making happiness at the theatre possible. Their spirit and their attitude towards their work is something inspired by the manager. Where team work exists there is courteous treatment and consideration for fellow employees. There is no grumbling at assignments. There is a willingness to accept criticism. There is an alertness to notice what can promote the theatre's welfare. The good name and success of

the theatre is a matter of personal pride. This means that while on duty and while away from the theatre they will do nothing that will reflect discredit on the theatre. Moreover, they will discuss the theatre intelligently. They will be its "boosters." Their pride in it will develop a wider appreciation of it as an institution.

No Tipping.

There is no reason why any member of the theatre staff should be permitted to accept a tip. A tip is given for "something extra," something that is not generally expected by the patron. The staff should be trained to give service that is not only above the average, but anticipates every need of the patron, and renders unexpected conveniences. There is no limit to what the staff should do. Therefore, nothing can be done which could make the patron feel "That was more than could be expected at this theatre and should be rewarded with a tip." The theatre should offer the highest standards of service. The employee who accepts a tip contradicts this. If tipping is permitted, it is certain that favoritism will exist.

In calculating the cost of theatre attendance, patrons will be inclined to include the tip. For instance, at a theatre where the admission price is fifty cents and tipping prevails, the patron realizes that the cost of theatre attendance is sixty cents and not fifty. The advertised price is deceptive. If tipping is not permitted at the competitive theatre, you can be sure that the difference in cost because of the tip is seriously considered. If the salary paid employees is so low that tipping seems justified, it is better business to raise the salary and stop tipping. Every time a tip is refused, the theatre's service is advertised in a way that would not be possible by the expenditure of many times the amount represented by salary increases which do away with tipping.

Don't Over-do It.

There is such a thing as carrying "courtesy" and "politeness" to such an extreme that the patron is made to feel uncomfortable. It may be so extreme that it is ridiculous. Too

many "Thank you, sir"s and too many "Please, madam"s are unnatural.

Too stiff and too formal a bearing makes the democratic patron feel that there is "something wrong." Ushers bowing at the middle and doing everything but genuflecting to the patron are not generally pleasing. The motion picture theatre is democratic. Many a patron comes from humble surroundings, so stiffly formal greetings and ostentatious formalities really startle. This is not consistent with gracious courtesy. A simple, sincere welcome is desired. Patrons like to see an usher's happy, natural smile. They do not like to see him suffer as he tries to play the part of a hireling harnessed up in the trappings of a flunky. Courtesy, consideration, interest and helpfulness should be cheery and pleasant. Stiff formality is cold; often it is offensive.

Printed Instructions.

It is well to set down in type the regulations governing the duties of employees. These instructions should be simple, definite. direct. When such instructions are in the possession of an employee, corrections can be made quickly by referring to a rule that is violated. Moreover, the employees have something to refer to as a standard for measuring their work. They cannot keep everything in mind. Such printed instructions save the manager's time. New employees are thus trained more easily. Word-of-mouth direction is never as explicit as something that has been worked out carefully and then set down in type. A personal touch can be added to the instruction by including brief inspirational messages on lovalty, team work, ideals of the theatre, the importance of the work, and the individual development which it can promote. If the expense of printing these instructions is not within the theatre's means the instructions can be typewritten.

Uniforms.

If young men make up the theatre staff there are many advantages in providing uniforms. The young man in uniform responds to appeals for precision, accuracy and military bearing. Almost every youth has dreams of West Point. The

uniform brings him closer to his dreams. He learns to respect the uniform. It is a constant reminder of duty. The uniform distinguishes theatre employees more readily and prevents misunderstanding. It carries authority. In the crowd the uniform stands out, and because it is easily recognized, helps the efficient handling of crowds. The uniform lends color and atmosphere to the theatre. Its purpose is three-fold—inspirational, decorative and practical.

General Rules.

Detailed regulations for the duties and conduct of the theatre staff are not practical here because the problems of each theatre differ. But the following suggestions can be applied generally:

- 1. Employees should be able to answer questions concerning the program, the theatre, and coming attractions.
- 2. Gum chewing, smoking or eating while on duty should not be tolerated.
- Cleanliness of the theatre should be of interest to all the staff.
- 4. Training should be given for every possible emergency, such as accidents to patrons, fire, panic, wire trouble, etc.
- 5. All unnecessary noises and disturbance to patrons should be avoided.
- 6. Comments of patrons concerning the program or the theatre should be reported to the manager.
- 7. Employees should be on the alert to render every possible service, such as holding coats, opening doors, assisting children and the infirm, etc. The needs of patrons should be anticipated if possible.
- 8. Employees, while on duty, should not converse with friends or with other employees except on matters of business.
- While on duty no special greetings should be given to friends.

The Cashier.

The neat, attractive cashier is an asset. She should be in clear view of the patrons. The patron's opinion of the theatre

is often determined at the box office. The cashier can sell tickets in a way that makes patrons ill-at-ease, or in a way that makes the patron feel welcome. The cashier's demeanor, her greeting, prompt service, the way requests are listened to, the way questions are answered, her smiling "Thank you" with each ticket sale, are all important. The cashier should be well informed concerning the program, starting hours, etc., and coming attractions. She should have a schedule at hand for ready reference. She should be supplied with fan magazines and trade papers so her information is up to date.

Listen to the questions asked at your box office and you will realize how business can be built up by a well-informed cashier.

The box office should be spotlessly clean. Coins should be kept out of sight. Newspapers and magazines should not be permitted on the counter. The box office should not be a make-up booth. Dressing for the street and anticipating the closing hours should not be tolerated. Long conversations prevent the sale of tickets because impatient patrons will move down the street to another theatre if waiting is prolonged.

Ticket Taker.

Patrons can be greeted by the ticket taker in a manner that assures them that there is a welcome and pleasure waiting within. There should be a smile and a "Thank you" with the acceptance of every ticket. This is not an unimportant post. Have you ever had a ticket taken by one who was looking out at the street and expected you to reach where his hand was? Or by one who looked at you as though that theatre were the last place in the world where you had a right to be? Such carelessness and inattention makes a very poor impression. This work is so much a matter of routine that it becomes monotonous, machinelike and lacks personality unless constant reminders are given that right here the patron should be welcomed as a guest. Posture is important. Slouching and carelessness in dress and gesture are defects. Conversations at this point should be discouraged because other patrons are thus delayed. When wrong tickets are presented the fault may not lie with the patron. Such matters should be handled quietly

and tactfully. Patrons should not be forced to wait an unreasonable time for the appearance of the manager or someone else to settle the matter. The routine for handling such cases should be very definite.

Ushers.

Selecting, training, and supervising ushers should not be left entirely to some subordinate. Efficient ushering is an important factor for the success of any theatre. Patrons depend very much upon the usher. Coming from the street to the semidarkness of the theatre with its unfamiliar surroundings, they appreciate the services of a capable usher. Strangers in your theatre depend more than others upon the ushers. Regular patrons may have preferences for particular sections, and as far as is possible such preferences should be acknowledged. Loud talking, laughter, whistling, humming and unnecessary noise by ushers should not be tolerated. Position in aisles, reliefs, signal systems, handling of tapes, refunds, stand, gesture, announcement of direction-should all be clearly set down according to the needs and policy of the theatre. Efficient ushering does not happen by chance. It requires constant training and careful supervision.

Staff Conferences.

A better understanding of general problems and the promotion of better co-operation are possible by staff conferences. When properly conducted they can do much good. Backbiting and jealous comment should be guarded against. Frank discussion should be stimulated. Who attends the staff conference depends upon the type of theatre. But the object of such conferences is to improve routine and get new viewpoints and ideas. Practically every member of the staff can be helpful if interest is stimulated. The manager who considers himself too important to accept an idea from an usher or a suggestion from a cashier, is closing the door to help.

Arrange a plan for your conference. Do not let it be a haphazard discussion. It is well to assign a particular subject for each conference. For instance, your schedule might include subjects such as starting hours, preferences of patrons for stars and types of pictures, ventilation and heating, repairs, refunds, word-of-mouth advertising and what the community thinks of the theatre, lighting, fire hazards, the lobby, etc.

One manager who has his entire staff present for weekly conferences reported that it was an usher who called attention to the fact that blank space on the theatre wall could be used for announcements. The porter called attention to the fact that electric meters were not registering correctly. The cashier reported that when a certain star was on the program many regular patrons never visited the theatre. The doorman suggested the use of lattice work exits for summertime. All the staff had suggestions about the effectiveness of advertising mediums in the locations where they resided.

The leadership qualities of the manager will determine the success of such conferences. The staff must be devoted and not regard him as a boss. They must consider the theatre as "theirs." If they are not interested, and perform only the set duties of their positions, conferences will be a waste of time.

Employees Club.

When the theatre staff is large enough, a club can be organized to unite the employees for the promotion of their common interests and the welfare of the theatre. promotes friendly relations and develops co-operative spirit. It need not interfere with the proper business attitude that should exist among employees. The expense of the club can be covered by a small initiation fee and by small dues. Even if some expenditure on the part of the management is required for the success of the club, the good results attainable make it justified. For the club members, their families and friends, dances, smokers, outings and picnics can be arranged. These develop sympathetic understanding and promote loyalty. The manager's attendance at meetings of the club makes him better known to his staff and permits him to stimulate deeper interest in the theatre's welfare. Besides, this contact with employees gives him a better understanding of the personalities who are working for him. Such clubs decrease the average labor turnover. Ushers particularly are encouraged to remain longer in the theatre's service because of the social advantages offered by the club. A certain "family spirit" can be developed which can be so regulated that it will be consistent with good business practices.

Bulletin.

A monthly bulletin on the style of a house organ can be prepared by members of the staff for circulation among the employees. If the expense of printing is not within the means of the theatre, the bulletin can be mimeographed or typed. The purpose of the bulletin is to develop organization morale. It can carry inspirational editorials, gossip about personalities, accounts of outstanding work by members of the staff, information about the theatre, and announcements of coming attractions. It does what an efficient house organ should do. Like the employees club, it develops a co-operative spirit and helps to unity and loyalty. It stimulates the individual's interest in the welfare of the theatre.

Contests.

To promote better service, contests can be used to good advantage. For instance, at certain seasons of the year a "Thank You Contest" can be held. The contest is arranged so that a reward is given to the theatre employee who receives the greatest number of "Thank You"s from patrons during the period of the contest. Or a reward can be given to those who receive special mention for exceptional service in letters to the management, or in comment from patrons. The purpose of this contest is explained to patrons in the house program or on the screen. This gives the opportunity of bringing to the attention of patrons the standards of service that prevail in the theatre. The contest has stimulative effect and tones up the entire staff, because it calls for exceptional effort.

Bonus Awards.

A nominal money prize or some other prize can be given each week or each month to the member of the staff whose work has been outstanding during that period. The award should be made during the meeting of the staff. The manager himself can preside at the meeting and make the reward more than a mere transfer of the prize. He can make it impressive. He can call attention to details of service and use the reward as a means of encouragement. More interest is developed in contests for awards if the members of the staff are given a rating each week. This rating lists certain qualities of service which are brought to the attention of the staff. For instance, rating can be given for neatness, punctuality, alertness, tolerance, courtesy, efficiency in an emergency, preparation of comment cards, co-operation, expression, accuracy in starting hours of unit and program information, etc. Thus a continuous education for the staff in the standards of service is conducted. The ratings might be averaged over the period of a month or a half year when more valuable awards could be given the leaders. Inasmuch as tipping should not be permitted, these awards give the staff an incentive and something to look forward to for exceptional effort. But if the award is made in a perfunctory way its effect is negligible.

Comment Cards.

Comments of patrons concerning the program and concerning different details of operation are valuable to the manager. Members of the staff hear many such comments from patrons. Accordingly, it has proved useful to distribute each day to members of the staff a "comment card." This card can be in size about six inches by four. One side can be used to report comments concerning the program and the other side to report comments concerning details of operation. These cards can be made out each night by members of the staff and delivered to the manager. It is evident that comments will not be of very much help if they are not explicit and specific. The staff can be trained in selecting those comments for report which will be most serviceable. It is obvious that a report of these comments will bring to the attention of the management many details that might otherwise be overlooked. Of course an occasional comment by an eccentric patron need not be taken as indicative of the general attitude. However, when many patrons make similar comment concerning the same point, it is evident that these comments deserve serious attention. If a reward is given regularly to the member of the staff

whose comment cards are most intelligently prepared, more attention will be given to this important detail.

Suggestion Cards.

Suggestions should always be welcomed from members of the staff. They often notice details of operation which the manager might overlook. Some managers require each member of the staff to fill out what is called a "Suggestion Card" each week listing three suggestions that would improve the operation of the theatre. As an incentive a small cash prize can be given periodically for the best suggestions offered. If these suggestions are discussed with the staff and comment is made by the manager, it becomes more than mere routine. It cannot be expected that the staff will continue to be on the alert to notice what would improve operation if the suggestions are merely filed and nothing is said or done about them. The manager must be patient and not expect too much at first. He should realize that the effectiveness of these suggestions will depend in good part on the way he educates his staff in the purpose and standard of the different phases of operations. Suggestions become more practical if each week attention is limited to some particular detail of operation.

The Staff as Boosters.

It is expected that each member of the staff will be so proud of the theatre that in talking with friends he will call attention to the quality of the program and of operation. This valuable word-of-mouth advertising should be stimulated. The staff can be constantly reminded of what they can do in this regard. At certain times of the year the staff can be brought together and asked that each member discuss the theatre with ten friends each day over the period of a month. For instance, this plan can be followed during Greater Movie Season. Every member of the staff will be asked to hand in the names of the ten people with whom the theatre is discussed each day. These ten names multiplied by the number of the theatre staff and then multiplied by thirty days of the month give a very imposing total of people in the community whose attention was

drawn to the theatre through the efforts of the staff. These discussions should not be haphazard. Each day the manager can talk to his staff about some detail of operation and this should be the subject which is to be discussed in the word-of-mouth advertising. Many niceties of a theatre's service are not generally known to the public. These and coming attractions can be so intelligently discussed that interest will be developed and receipts increased. The effectiveness of this plan depends upon the manager impressing his staff with the value of their "boosting" and on the way he explains each subject that they will talk about.

Lost and Found Department.

Even in small theatres, enough articles are lost by patrons to justify the establishing of some system for such emergencies. Patrons know that such service is rendered at most theatres. If they learn that no provision is made for recovering lost articles at your theatre a very bad impression is created. A small space can be set aside for lost and found articles in the theatre. This space can be divided into fourteen compartments each carrying the name of a day of the week. Articles found at the theatre each day are put into the compartment reserved for that day of the week. At the end of the week articles that have not been returned are moved to the second row of shelves. Thus every two weeks lost articles not claimed in a two weeks' period can be removed and given to a local charitable institution. A record of lost and found articles should be kept on a set form. This form lists the name, date, hour and detailed description of the lost or found article with the patron's name and address. If the lost article is not found within a day or two, a letter can be sent to the patron stating this fact and assuring the patron that if it is found in the future and properly identified it will be returned. When the lost article is found a letter can be sent requesting that the patron call at the office and identify the lost article. It is important that the description of the article be most detailed and that proper identification be insisted upon. This saves the management embarrassment when lost articles are given to the wrong persons. A lost and found department improperly

operated can do more harm than good. Because this service has an influence in building patronage it should be called to the attention of patrons. Even if patrons do not have occasion to use the service, they appreciate the fact that the management makes it available. Communications with patrons concerning lost and found articles can be so worded that they leave the impression that service to patrons is an ideal of the theatre.

Program Schedule.

Patrons in the lobby and throughout the theatre want to know the starting hours of different units of the program. Wall panels can be set up in prominent places listing the name of each unit and its starting time for every performance. This panel can be so decorative that it is attractive. It might also include the play date of coming attractions and also a few lines of institutional advertising. It goes without saying that the staff should be equipped to answer questions concerning starting hours. Managers can supply their ushers with small cards that fit into an usher's pocket, listing the starting hours and facts generally inquired about concerning the program. But if there are no wall panel schedules, the usher's work will be often interrupted by questions that the patron could answer by referring to the wall panel.

Patrons Register.

Doctors and others while attending the theatre are likely to be called for in emergencies. They appreciate the fact that there is some way of notifying the management so that they will be reached within the theatre. For this a register can be kept where patrons who expect to be called during the performance can list the section of the house where they will sit. Even the aisle and seat number can be listed. Then, when such persons are called for emergencies, no general announcement need be made and the audience disturbed. The usher can go directly to where the patron is seated. This service should be brought to the attention of patrons because of the good opinion that it creates of the theatre's service.

Umbrella Service.

Umbrellas should be kept at the theatre for the service of patrons on rainy days. One dollar can be deposited and the umbrella loaned without charge, with the understanding that the deposit will be given back when the umbrella is returned. Or the umbrella handle can be stamped with the name of the theatre, and the patron not required to leave a deposit but only a name and address so that the umbrella can be called for. This latter method is more suitable for smaller communities. The umbrella service need not be restricted to patrons within the theatre. It can be made known that those who are near the theatre during the rainstorm are welcome to the same service. Like other distinctive theatre services this should be advertised. Although only a small percentage of patrons will use the service, its existence creates a very good impression.

Bundle Checking.

Theatres located in the shopping districts have built up patronage for matinees by the efficient operation of a bundle checking room. At this room patrons who have finished shopping can leave their bundles and then attend the performance. The bundles are carefully checked and when necessary can be more securely wrapped. In some cases a wooden handle lettered with the name of the theatre is placed on bundles for the convenience of patrons. This service can be advertised at the nearby department stores. The relatively small cost involved is justified by the returns. Arrangements can be made with nearby stores to have bundles delivered at the theatre for patrons who will see the performance and get the bundles at the theatre's bundle service room.

Program Holders.

Programs should be available at different parts of the theatre for patrons who might be on their way to a seat without having received a program at the entrance. If an usher must be called every time a program is needed much unnecessary interruption is involved. Attention can be called in the theatre program to the location of the program racks.

Radium paint can be used to make these program racks more noticeable.

Writing Room.

If there is a writing desk on your mezzanine keep it equipped. A writing desk without ink or pens is a cause of inconvenience and aggravation. The patron expects writing material at such a desk. Stationery can be supplied carrying some message of institutional advertising. Illustrated post cards such as those supplied for coming attractions or others with views of the theatre should be available. Such post cards can be mailed at the expense of the theatre when addressed by patrons.

Street Service.

On snowy days a porter with a whisk broom could stand beneath the marquee to brush the snow from patrons entering the theatre. This will prevent snow from being tracked into the house. It is an instance of the management's thoughtfulness which will be much appreciated.

Telephone Service.

Free telephone service for patrons has lead to such abuses that it does not seem justified. However, telephone accommodations should be available for patrons. If there is not a booth the manager will be bothered with requests, and he must either permit the use of his office telephone or make this statement which is not consistent with good service "There is no telephone here."

A booth with a slot machine requires very little space and very little maintenance. It can be built to harmonize with the decorative plan of the surroundings. It is well to have a supply of nickels in the check room for the service of patrons who desire the proper coins. The walls of the telephone booth can be used for neat frames announcing coming attractions or for frames carrying institutional advertising.

Maps.

An automobile map and a city transportation map can be displayed in the gentlemen's rest room and in the ladies' rest

room. These maps can be secured at very small expense and neatly framed. Their display has the advantage of saving time of employees in answering questions. The local Chamber of Commerce may supply a series of "Booster Slogans" which can be set in the corner of the map. The display of these slogans is an indication of the theatre's interest in the community.

Parking Space.

The problem of selecting space for patrons visiting the theatre by automobile, should be seriously considered. Parking regulations for the neighborhood of the theatre should be clearly understood. If the theatre has a footman, he should assist patrons by suggesting where there may be available space. The cashier also should have an answer ready for the question "Where can I park my car?".

Theatre managers have taken a vacant lot near the theatre and advertised free parking space for their patrons. When the patron parks the car a check is given at the parking space and this is stamped by the cashier when a ticket is purchased. If the check is returned at the parking space without the cashier's stamp the regular parking space rate is charged. Otherwise, no charge is made. Police regulations should be clearly understood so that patrons parking their car near the theatre will not be inconvenienced. A summary of these regulations referring to the neighborhood of the theatre can occasionally be carried in the house program.

Publicity for Theatre Service.

Every detail of service is an influence for building theatre patronage. Bring to the attention of your patrons the services that are available at your theatre. For this the theatre program can be used. Occasionally a circular can be distributed with the full story of the service conveniences that exist. Occasionally your newspaper advertisement can mention some distinctive service feature.

The amusement page is open to human interest stories on your staff and your service features. If such stories are prepared in an interesting way it is not hard to have them placed. For instance one of the largest newspapers in Texas carried a

Yeature story concerning the cashier at a certain motion picture theatre. This story stressed the fact that her smile and her courtesy and her efficient handling of questions had made her a very popular figure in the community.

A prominent newspaper in the Middle West carried a feature article reading "The most courteous boy in our city." This article told how the page boy in a certain theatre greeted thousands of people during the year.

Of course these stories were handled in an interesting way and the advertising of the theatre's service was suggested rather than emphasized. There are many human interest stories that can be written about the training of the staff, the type of young men who act as ushers, the organist, the orchestra leader, the projectionist, etc. A series of articles on the work of different members of the staff can be made very interesting. It is easier of course to place such articles in newspapers of smaller cities.

But even a New York newspaper carried a human interest story feature under the heading "College Boy Ushers are Human Guide Books." This article told in an interesting way the many questions ushers are required to answer concerning points of interest in New York, how to reach them, etc. There is no reason why the amusement page should be confined to stories concerning the program. There is a general interest in the theatre itself. The management should capitalize on this interest.

Theatre Awards.—Good-will for the theatre and incidentally considerable newspaper publicity is possible by donating a medal or a cup as a reward for various achievements. For instance, the theatre can donate a cup to be awarded each year to the citizen who has done most to further the welfare of the community. A committee of prominent citizens can be chosen to make the award. During the year the theatre cup can be displayed in different store windows. If one of the local newspapers sponsors this contest, it is evident that frequent mention of the contest will be made in its columns. Thus after any outstanding achievement that promotes civic welfare, the individual responsible can be mentioned as a candidate for the theatre cup. The reward of the cup at the close of the year

can be made very impressive. The expense involved is small compared with the good results that are possible if this is properly managed.

Or a cup can be given to the fireman or to the policeman whose general record or whose particular act of heroism is outstanding. For this award a voting contest could be conducted under the auspices of a local newspaper.

If there is a college in your community it might be well to offer a cup or a medal to the member of the athletic team whose batting average was highest or whose scoring total was highest for the season. If there is a local high school league, or even a grammar school league, or even a tournament, a prize from the theatre not only develops good will but is the means of securing helpful publicity. It is evident that it is better to offer a prize that must be contested for throughout a year or during a season rather than during a single contest, because the length of the period of the contest makes further publicity and a wider interest possible.

Entrants for beauty contests or for dance contests can be sponsored by the theatre with the same advantages in publicity and good-will that are indicated above, providing of course that the contests are so managed and the theatre's candidate of such a reputation that discreditable comment will not be aroused.

Theatre Athletic Teams.—Added publicity is given to the theatre's name if athletic teams composed of members of the staff carry the theatre's name in athletic meets and tournaments. A relay team, a basketball team or a baseball team carrying the theatre's name can bring that name before the public. Photographs of the team and accounts of its contests will get a place in the local sporting page. Such teams develop morale in theatre staffs besides having the publicity advantage indicated.

Conclusion.

It is very evident that building theatre patronage does not depend entirely on the program of the stage and screen. The motion picture theatre is striving to establish a regular clientele. Every visit of a patron offers the opportunity of bringing that patron back again. It will not be the program alone that brings the patron back, because the program changes. It will be the institutional appeal of the theatre—all that is signified by "the home of entertainment where the patron is welcomed as a guest and where courteous consideration is given every need." This shows how important is the relation of the theatre staff to the patrons, and also the niceties of service and the conveniences that are available at the theatre. The manager should be the model for the entire staff. His personal appearance, his personal conduct, his bearing, his courteous treatment of patrons, his consideration and anxiety to please will all set the standard which the others will follow. It is practically impossible for the staff to reach a higher standard than that set by the manager.

CHAPTER VIII

YOUR COMMUNITY

The theatre manager cannot know too much about his particular community and his potential patrons. Potential patrons are all those who are possible customers of the theatre. There is practically no theatre that has reached its maximum in attendance. Theatre records are broken even at the theatres that seem to have reached their maximum. Therefore, no manager should ever sit back satisfied with results. The minute he ceases to improve his operation and to draw new patrons by further ingenuity and clever merchandizing, an active competition will cut into his patronage. If there is no active theatre competition, those patrons who were attracted by intensive effort begin to slip off and lose the habit of theatre attendance because other forms of entertainment make a stronger appeal.

Two things are necessary—maintaining existing regular patronage—and—attracting new patrons. In the community served by any theatre, there is a potential patronage including those who are not regular patrons of a particular theatre that can be won by skillful merchandising. Within the limits from which the theatre draws, there is what might be called untouched soil from which new patrons can be developed. These include those of theatre-going age who seldom or never visit your theatre. Besides these, there are children who will soon reach the theatre-going age. In these children the manager can develop not only a love of motion picture entertainment, but also a fixed preference for a particular theatre. A large percentage of your present theatre attendance is below the age of twenty-one. Each new year many others become of theatregoing age. You should do something to win these prospective patrons.

Retailing.

The theatre manager is a retail salesman. Retail selling in every business requires analysis of the product, analysis of the

customer traffic within the neighborhood of the institution, and the use of those advertising means most efficient for reaching potential customers. We are considering here the community as a center of theatre patrons and also patron traffic within the neighborhood of the theatre.

The closer any theatre operation is to the preferences and habits of a particular community, the more likely it is to succeed. Every community is different. Every manager faces problems which are unlike the problems of other managers. Even the very same program must be sold differently to different communities. Thus it is evident that knowledge of the community is most important. This knowledge is not acquired over-night. It is not a knowledge that is learned once and for always. Even managers who have lived in a community over a long period of years must constantly keep pace with new developments. Many a successful manager when moved to another theatre fails to succeed there because of his ignorance of the new community.

Analysis.

Analysis of the community is important for every retailer. It is especially important for the theatre manager because of the nature of what he is selling. Other retailers sell standard products which appeal to the same taste and the same appetite everywhere. The same can of beans sold over the grocery counter satisfies the same appetite everywhere. So do standard products like butter, bread, candy, canned goods, etc. With such standard products and so many others that are retailed, it is very often price and not preference or taste which makes the sale at one store rather than at another.

Preferences.

But entertainment depends on the particular preference of the community. It is most effectively merchandized when advertising emphasizes those features which appeal most to the community's preference. Merchandizing of entertainment is often successful because it is tied-in with something of particular interest to the community at the time. Originality and novelty of appeal that will be effective locally can only be decided upon with an understanding of the particular community. Even the style and wording of advertising must be suited to the individual community. Words and phrases that are effective in some communities are not effective in others. This is why stereotyped general statements are never as effective as those prepared in the language of the community and focused on sentiments in which the community is particularly interested.

Timeliness.

Local holidays and local celebrations and local news events offer many an opportunity for making theatre merchandizing more effective in a particular community. Many a clever exploitation idea was successful because it was suited to a particular community, and later when adopted by another manager was a failure because unsuited to another community. Such instances of skillful merchandizing are often tagged with the word "showmanship." But where showmanship is found, there is found also careful thought and thorough understanding of the particular community.

Headings.

Not only in selecting advertising appeals but in determining policies of operation, knowledge of the community is necessary. Knowledge of the community is not acquired in a haphazard way. It is not developed simply through long residence. Because communities differ, no set plan can be given for building up the necessary knowledge. However, there are certain general headings which suggest information that will prove useful to the theatre manager. These headings as given here seem formidable. It looks as though they demand that the theatre manager be a statistician. Such is not intended. over these headings and see whether they suggest information that you could use to improve your understanding of the community. Ask at each sub-heading "How will this information be useful in selecting advertising appeals for different types of program—in selecting mediums of advertising—in deciding on policies of operation?"

The manager assigned to an unfamiliar community will have in these headings some guide for quickly building up a working knowledge:

The History of the Community.—How and why it started. The commercial and industrial influences which have determined and will determine the community's developments—Outstanding local historical events—Local holidays and occasions, the date, the spirit and extent of the celebration—Those particularly interested in each local holiday and celebration—Facts connected with holiday upon which the theatre manager can capitalize—Facts which will hamper theatre attendance—Local personages prominent in the development of the community—The nature of civic pride and what determines that pride, such as industrial and commercial assets, scenic advantages, climate, etc.,—Places of interest, etc.

Industrial and Commercial Status.—Principal industries—Products manufactured—Advertising of local products which in turn advertise the community—A comparison with other centers of the industry—Is the city specilized or diversified in its industries?—The history and development of each business institution—Factors on which employees' pride is based—Which industries are permanent, which are temporary, which close down at certain periods of the year?—Agencies for employment—Classification of labor by sex, skilled or unskilled workers—Are the industries in prosperous condition and on what depends their prosperity?—Type of work and the working conditions—Paydays, etc.

Population.—The year by year increase in population—Probable future increase—The trend of increase in different neighborhoods—Population by wards or districts and the type of population in each—Number of families—Tourist visitors—What brings them to the community?—Population within easy travel distance of the theatre—When visitors come to town and why—The shopping district—When and by whom patronized.

Social Status.—Living, reading and buying habits—Degree of literacy and education—Nationality and racial characteristics—Bank deposits and postal receipts; how these compare with other communities of the same size—Average income of fam-

ilies—How the family budget is pro-rated—Cultural traditions—Political traditions—Schools as to number, type, etc.,—School organizations—Teachers' organizations—Recreational facilities—Libraries—Librarian reports showing type of fiction preferred—Magazine circulation and preference—Motion picture fan magazine circulation and preference—Types of stores patronized and why—Musical preferences—Newspaper reading habits—Living conditions as to type of home, rentals, housing facilities, etc.

Clubs and Societies.—Purpose of each—Type of member-ship—Character of activities—Religious organizations—Chamber of Commerce—Other organizations: Commercial, Civic, Fraternal, Labor, Social, etc.,—Rotary—American Legion—D. A. R.—Boy Scouts—Girl Scouts—Women's Clubs—Better Film Committees—Reading Clubs—Art Clubs—Camera Clubs—Dramatic Societies—Dancing Schools, etc.

Climate.—Are there wide variations in temperature?—How do extremes of temperature affect living and business?—Seasonal changes as they influence theatre operation—Possible weather competition—How this competition can be met—How weather affect patronage from different districts.

Theatre Location.—Accessibility by Trolly, Auto, Bus Line, Train—Car-line transfer points—Parking facilities and parking regulations—Environment of theatre—Side of street most travelled and why—Visibility of theatre front and its advertising—Passerby traffic at different hours—Are the passersby on their way to work, to school or to shop?—Prominent shopping institutions—Shopping days and shopping hours—Dates of big bargain sales—Analysis of passerby traffic as to age and sex, etc.—Type of customers at nearby stores—Nearby sources of possible drop-in trade, such as factories, public institutions, department stores, trolley transfer points, etc.—The most travelled streets and their relation to the theatre—Night street crowds, where they are heavy and why.

Government.—Form of Government—Dates of election—Government chart showing positions, duties, name and term of officials—Functions of government that concern the theatre such as departments of health, police, fire, licenses, social welfare, employment, etc.—Community position on political

question—Movements that have strong local following, such as establishing aviation landing field, more schools, a new park, new zoning law, new railroad terminal, harbor facilities, vice crusade, Sunday amusements, etc.

Competition.—Every possible form of competition which might attract those who would otherwise attend your theatre—Legitimate theatres—Dance halls—Beaches—Amusement parks—Boxing clubs—Social clubs—Carnivals—Athletic contests—Circus—Excursions—Church affairs—Women's Club activities—Other club meetings. In each case consider the time of the competition, the type of advance advertising used, the class of people attracted, possibilities of tying-in the theatre campaign with each.

Motion Picture Theatre Competition.

Under certain conditions competition has an advantage. Some communities do not realize the excellence of motion picture theatre entertainment offered them because there is no possibility of comparison. When the community is not overseated, such competition has the advantage of forcing the theatre manager to greater efforts. Active competition develops a more general interest in motion pictures and thus helps to create more motion picture fans. It helps to handle turn-away crowds when particularly strong programs are booked at one theatre.

Some argue that one theatre manager should disregard the operation of his competitor. This is true in the sense that he should not always be influenced by what the competitor does. It is true where the competitor practices unsound methods of operation, such as extravagant advertising. Because your competitor uses half-page newspaper ads, it does not necessarily follow that you must do the same. Nor should his business mistakes lead you from sound business practices. A competitor whose operation is not basicly sound will not last long. However, it is good business sense to know all you can concerning competitive operation. After all, potential patrons will decide between your theatre and the competitive theatre. You attract patrons by making your appeal stronger than that of the competitor, by giving patrons more for their money than the

competitor does. To know what details of your operation are distinctive and not available at the competitive theatre you must know what is available there. It is by calling attention to that "something extra and something different" which your theatre offers that you attract many patrons. Be keenly aware of competition, but pay more attention to running your own business than to competition. The best way to worry a competitor is by running your theatre better, not by worrying about how he operates.

Never resort to unfair competition. Belittling the competitive theatre is not good business. Remember, your institution is to live a long time in the community. You do not accomplish your purpose by achieving immediate returns at the cost of ultimate loss.

Business clubs today discourage nasty criticism of competitors. A business man of the community will respect your fairness, but will resent what is unfair. Even if your competitor resorts to unfair practices, realize that in the long run these cannot be successful. Do not be led into imitating him.

Your knowledge of competitive operation should include—History of the competitive house—Why and how it has built patronage—Why it has lost patronage—Details of operation such as admission price, service, music, ventilation, equipment, program starting hours, advertising mediums used, regular patrons, transient patrons, family trade—The attitude of the community towards the theatre.

Attendance Charts.

A detailed record of theatre attendance showing the attendance at different hours, on different days, for different programs, gives the theatre manager information that is helpful for many phases of operation. Records can be charted or diagrammed for ready reference. This information is helpful in arranging the starting time of different units of the program. It serves as a guide for regulating ventilation and temperature. It serves as a guide in arranging hours of usher service and relief. It serves as a guide in advertising campaigns because the advertising can be focused to build up attendance for hours or days that are regularly weak. For instance, if the chart shows

that afternoon attendance on a certain day each week is below average, the manager can analyze the cause and take means to build up that attendance. The attendance record also serves as a guide in planning holiday programs because similar holidays present conditions that are different from conditions that affect attendance on other days. The record also serves as a guide for admission price changes. Of course, the record also gives indication of the preference of patrons for stars and types of pictures. This is a subject that will be given detailed treatment later.

Statistics.

The manager who relies solely on formal statistics will never have that same practical knowledge of the community that is possessed by the manager who besides having fact information also associates as much as he possibly can with people, listening, observing, and questioning on subjects which will give him a better insight into the daily lives of those whom he serves. For this the manager must be a good "mixer." To hold aloof and not mingle with your people is bad business. The more intimately you know them and know a greater number of them, the better.

Never confine your acquaintance to a small group. For instance, the manager who gets into a small society clique and devotes all his attention to them will never know much about the rest of the community. This limits his contact. The social activities of the manager cannot be regulated by his personal preference and his individual taste. Even in social intercourse he must remember that he is a theatre manager serving not a few but an entire community. If he were a merchant, catering to a select group, this practice might be justified. But as a theatre manager, because of the very nature of his business, he must be developing day and night an extended acquaintanceship and a detailed knowledge of his community.

Conclusion.

Knowledge of the community is a most important factor in the success of your theatre because according to that knowledge you will make your decision covering programs, mediums of advertising, admission prices, program starting hours, special performances, co-operative advertising, special contests, specialized appeals for outstanding highlights of the photoplays advertised and, in fact, determine every detail of your operation.

There is no theoretically perfect plan of operation which can be applied in the same way at every theatre. The best plan of operation depends on the community for which it is intended, and communities differ, not only in small details but in important matters which influence theatre attendance.

CHAPTER IX

WHY PEOPLE ATTEND YOUR THEATRE

THERE was a time when people purchased tickets for motion picture entertainment because of the novelty of seeing "pictures that moved." That time is long since past. Attendance at the motion picture theatre nowadays can be traced to other causes. The more familiar the manager is with these causes the better he can merchandise his program. For theatre attendance depends very much upon skillful merchandising—very often the salesmanship of the theatre manager.

The theatre manager is a salesman. He may carry the fancy title "Managing Director." He may be able to talk glibly about "the art of the motion picture" and "dramatic values." He may be an exceptional housekeeper. He may have a well-trained theatre staff. But if he cannot sell and sell intensively, his success will be limited.

The theatre manager who told the film salesman, "You do the selling, I do the exhibiting," must have overlooked the importance of salesmanship in his own work. The film salesman sells one photoplay to the theatre once. With this same photoplay the manager is responsible for hundreds of sales every day the photoplay is shown at his theatre. He does the exhibiting only if his selling is successful. If his selling is not successful there may be no audience for the exhibiting.

There must be retail selling for the photoplay just as there is for any other product retailed. The number of possible sales is heavy indeed. Count the number of seats in a theatre. Multiply that by the number of performances daily, and the total by the number of days a single program runs. The total is large. For instance, the 1,000 seat house with five performances daily, with a three day run for program, gives a total of 15,000 possible sales. Multiply 15,000 by the number of programs per year. The total is about two million possible sales a year, in a 1,000-seat theatre.

Salesmanship.

The motion picture theatre program does not sell itself. Salesmanship becomes more and more necessary as competition increases and the novelty of motion picture entertainment wears off. Selling the individual program for a particular theatre cannot be done entirely with national advertising. It is a local problem the solution of which rests upon the management of each theatre. Of course national advertising is a powerful asset which no manager should overlook. But it is ridiculous to expect that national advertising can accomplish all the selling required for a particular program at a particular theatre.

Difficulties.

As a salesman, the theatre manager's task is a difficult one. Other salesmen sell the same product or similar products right through the years. The manager has something different to sell every time the program changes. Other salesmen are not working against so short a time limit. The manager has just a few days in which to make sales for a particular program when the program changes further opportunity for sales are lost. If other salesmen do not sell a product within a certain time the merchandise can stay on the shelf or be stored away in the cellar for sales at a later period. Even bargain sales can be used to dispose of the merchandise. The theatre manager has nothing that can be stored away. When the program changes there is no opportunity to make up for mistakes, or neglect or carelessness. When the can of film goes back to the exchange, further revenue for the theatre is impossible. Other salesmen are generally selling a product only to a certain class of prospects. The manager is selling to everyone except the blind. Consequently, his selling must vary to suit different classes of prospects. Other salesmen can use practically the same appeal everywhere, because with a standard product, sales depend primarily upon price. The manager must consider changing fancies and changing preferences because entertainment is not a commodity that can be standardized. Other salesmen can devote their entire time to the problems of selling.

The busy theatre manager has countless other problems of theatre operation to which he must devote attention, and consequently he finds himself with a limited time to give to problems of merchandising which are more difficult than those of other salesmen.

Intensive.

It is evident that the selling of motion picture entertainment must be intensive. Every program requires intensive effort. This does not imply that sales activities for every program should be identical. There can be variety without the loss of intensity. Any one intensive sales activity is a business stimulant and like other stimulants it is fatal in over-doses. Consequently, constant repetition of the same intensive activity is not advisable.

Selection.

It is not a wise policy to use exaggerated and exceptional promotion for an exceptionally weak program. It is much better to strive for exceptional results with better programs because these make satisfied patrons and the satisfaction will help build patronage for future programs. Besides they offer the certainty of greater returns, and at least the increase in advertising expenditure, whether it be money or time, is justified. Nevertheless, it is the seemingly weaker programs that test the manager's skill. They need his efforts more than others. Almost anyone can get satisfactory results with the six outstanding programs of the year. However even the exceptional photoplay will not sell itself. But every photoplay possesses something which can be selected around which to build an advertising campaign. In fact, in every photoplay there are different high lights which when brought to the attention of different groups or classes of the community will build attendance. matter of the selection of the most effective appeal.

Appeals.

Skillful merchandising of any product requires an understanding of the problem, "What is the most effective appeal that can be made for this particular product?" Notice how advertising for other products is focused on some outstanding appeal which has been selected because that appeal is more likely to make sales than any other appeal. For instance, we find appeals based on service, style, convenience, health, price, durability, color, taste, odor, plan of payment, time saving, cleanness, double use, size of the package, the wrapping, etc. The wise selection of the proper appeal for a product is responsible for many sales which would not have been made if some other less effective appeal were chosen.

A Necessity.

The problem of selling motion picture entertainment is different from any other. Many of the appeals used for other products would be ineffective. It has been said that motion picture entertainment is a luxury and consequently the luxury appeal should be used. But as far as the manager is concerned he should feel that he is selling not a luxury but a real necessity. People need what he has to sell almost as much as they need food. The motion picture theatre today is an economic necessity. It answers a modern need. Conditions of living today are so confined, modern industry is so exacting in its demands, and modern living is so intense that people more than ever before need imaginative and emotional relaxation. Places where this relaxation was possible under other conditions of living no longer exist. Even the home has become confiningconsider living conditions in the modern apartment. Consequently, there must be a place for relaxation that is within the family budget. The modern motion picture theatre is the answer to a real need. It fits right into modern conditions. It came at a time when there was a new public able to afford the entertainment it could give, requiring that entertainment not as a luxury but as a real necessity.

Of course motion picture entertainment cannot be considered a necessity for the wealthy who can afford other diversions. But for those who are not wealthy it is a necessity. While present conditions of living exist it will continue to be a necessity. The routine of daily life develops boredom. The human being is not a machine that can go on working without diversion.

Change from the familiar routine is needed. The imagination must have a chance to play. Mental strength must be renewed. The quiet reading of fiction as a regular diet as an answer to the need for diversion is not sufficient. The motion picture theatre offers the most welcome escape from the humdrum existence of daily life. People go there to be entertained because they cannot entertain themselves or because other forms of entertainment are not accessible or not within their means. If there is any doubt about the necessity of motion picture theatre entertainment, consider what would happen if the motion picture theatres of the country were suddenly closed. The man who sells a necessity has more confidence in the number of sales possible than the one who sells a mere luxury. Consequently, the theatre manager should feel that what he is selling is a real necessity. This realization puts a certain confidence and a certain conviction into his efforts.

General Appeals.

If motion picture entertainment is a necessity, with what appeal should it be sold? The old appeal on the curiosity basis "pictures that move" is no longer effective. It is incorrect to state that motion picture patrons generally are interested in "acting"—meaning histrionic ability. The stars are known personalities, real "acquaintances" of whom actions consistent with their known personality are expected rather than "playing a part."

It does not suffice to say that the appeal of motion picture entertainment is "sport and adventure for the men, romance for the women" or "life, love and laughter." This general appeal, like any other general appeal, is less effective than the specific, detailed appeal. Besides, there is no general appeal that will be equally effective for every program.

Every advertising appeal can be traced to certain primitive human instincts such as curiosity, the social instinct, the desire to excel, self-preservation, the instinct to be admired, the instinct for personal gain. But besides these basic instincts to which appeal can be directed, there are others with which the manager should be familiar.

Reasons Why.

A manager was asked why people attend his theatre. He answered: "People like to see a show and they get it here." But how many different reasons for attendance at a particular theatre might be given? How many reasons are there which account for attendance? If the manager could be familiar with the innermost thoughts of theatre patrons he would find reasons for theatre attendance that he never suspected. If he were familiar with these reasons he might then make a more effective choice of the advertising appeal to be used for different programs.

It is impossible to list completely the reasons for theatre attendance, nor is it correct to state that they can all be reduced to "sport and adventure for the men, romance for the women."

Here is a brief list of reasons selected at random from over two thousand that might be given:

The desire to see the latest styles; to learn a new dance step; to see a photoplay of a novel that was read; to see how people live in other parts of the world; to get ideas for new styles of home furnishing; to see the photoplay of a stage success that was enjoyed or that was not seen but very much discussed; to learn etiquette; to study character; to learn to make love; for self-improvement; to hear the music; to enjoy comfortable surroundings such as are not in the home; to study character, to imitate a star who is a model; to escape the heat; to escape the cold; to see the latest news on the screen; to study the work of a director; to study how a star wears her clothes; to spend two hours in the company of a friend; to keep the family together at entertainment that will bring enjoyment to all; to learn screen technique or amateur camera work; to entertain guests; to re-live youth; to see a new screen face; to sing with the organ slides; to see phases of life which interest; to see a period of history which interests; to see how a mystery is solved; to see a new style of hair dress; because the theatre is close to home; to dream dreams that never came true; to laugh; to get the solution of a problem which is similar to an individual's own problem; interest in a type of story.

It is evident that all these reasons do not apply to any individual. Nor do all these reasons determine attendance at a particular program. Nor do these reasons include the many details of theatre operation which are considered by patrons in their decision to visit one theatre rather than another. But the reasons given at least indicate some vague desires which skillful advertising can convert into the purchase of theatre tickets.

The point to be made is that careful selection of the advertising appeal must take into account the fact that people differ, and from a wide variety of appeals selection should be made according to two things: the type of program which is to be merchandised and the type of prospective patrons for whom the advertising is intended. Thus the most effective appeal for each type or class of patron should be selected rather than a vague, general appeal. It must be remembered that the same appeal is not equally effective for all prospective patrons because they vary in age, in sex, in racial characteristics, in education, in reading habits, in their environment, in buying power, in experience and even in language limitations.

Preferences.

Patrons like to feel that they have some part in the selection of programs and that their preferences are considered by the management. These preferences can be learned by conversations with patrons and by reports from the staff concerning patron comment. It is a wise policy to listen carefully to the opinion of patrons concerning a program. The tactful manager who listens to the patron's opinion can very often call attention to some good point in the program which the patron might have overlooked. At any rate the patron feels a certain satisfaction in knowing that his opinion is carefully considered and that some assurance was given that in selecting future programs the patron's opinion would be considered.

A questionnaire concerning patron preference can be used to good advantage. This questionnaire can be distributed to patrons at the theatre or sent to their homes by mail. To encourage the careful filling out of this questionnaire fan photos or souvenirs can be offered. These will be mailed upon the receipt of the questionnaire or given to the patron who leaves the questionnaire filled out at the theatre. It is suggested that a personal letter accompany the questionnaire calling attention to the fact that the management is anxious to comply with the preferences of patrons and perhaps mentioning some of the outstanding productions that were well received by the community as indicative of the attempt made to secure the best. headings of the questionnaire depend on the policy of a particular theatre. Even if the opinions given on the questionnaire were not used by the management, the distinction of the questionnaire has the advantage of creating a favorable impression. But the fact of the matter is that helpful information is very often secured by these questionnaires and details are brought to the attention of the management which might otherwise be overlooked. A questionnaire is found in the appendix.

Audience Reaction.—A record should be kept showing the reaction of audiences to each program, indicating what it was that the patrons seemed to like about the theme, the locale, the direction, the cast, the title, sub-titling, new faces, the suitability of the story for the particular star, etc. This record should not be used only for feature photoplays. It should be used for short subjects, overtures, organ solos, scenics and novelties.

The experienced manager can usually "sense" audience reaction. Very often the box office report is a good indication of such reaction. However, unusual conditions may make the box office report misleading in this connection. In noting reaction to the photoplay "story" it must be remembered that supplementary records can be kept listing such things as—Stars preferred by women patrons, stars preferred by men patrons, types of photoplays preferred by audiences on certain days, requests of patrons for certain brands of pictures, requests of patrons for stars not usually shown at the theatre, requests of patrons for nationally advertised photoplays which will be released during the coming season, the general make-up of the audiences at different performances on different days, what percentage of the audience on different days at different performances are men, what percentage women, what percentage

children, etc. This information will be helpful not only in arranging programs and deciding upon program changes, but also for building up performances that are usually not well attended, and even for deciding upon starting hours of different program units.

Conclusion.

Although motion-picture theatre entertainment is a necessity, attendance at the theatre is often not what it should be. Any manager who counts the number of seats that might have been filled and were not filled for some reason or other over the period of an entire year gets an astounding total. What was the cause? What answer can be given to the question: "Why do not people attend the theatre?"

CHAPTER X

WHY PEOPLE DO NOT ATTEND YOUR THEATRE

I T is important to select the most effective appeal for any production that is advertised. It is just as important to understand what might be called "sales resistances." In other words, there are obstacles which must be overcome before even the most effective appeal can get results.

Habits.

In selling any product the most general sales resistance is human nature's unwillingness to do something that requires unaccustomed activity. Those who are not in the habit of doing a certain thing or using a certain product are immediately on their guard when asked to do it or use that product. As far as the theatre manager is concerned, this applies primarily to selling to those who are not in the habit of attending a motion picture theatre, or not in the habit of attending a particular theatre, or not in the habit of attending regularly. For such prospects it is evident that an obstacle must be overcome which does not exist as far as those are concerned who are dyed-inthe-wool fans and regular patrons of a particular theatre. Usually a specialized campaign must be used to break down this sales resistance before an appeal for a particular program can be effective.

Misunderstanding.

Another general sales resistance for any product is an incomplete understanding of what the product advertised really is or what it can really do. This is something that the manager might well consider. Unless people realize what motion picture theatre attendance can do for them and how much they really need it, they are not as responsive as they otherwise would be to the advertised appeal of a particular program. In any community there are many who do not realize how necessary entertainment is. Some have gotten into the habit of considering

it a mere luxury or a mere "time waster." They do not understand that such entertainment gives them renewed vigor for their day's work. They do not realize that it develops what might be called "mental fitness" sending them back with new strength and without "that tired feeling." Perhaps some of them do not realize how motion pictures have improved in the past few years, and their opinion of theatre attendance as something which is actually profitable to them is based upon one or two unsatisfactory programs which they chanced to see. Evidently if motion picture entertainment is considered a mere "time waster" there exists a sales resistance which must be overcome before any advertising appeal for a particular program can be effective. At Greater Movie Season and at other times when the manager is making a general drive for attendance, this sales resistance should be given special attention. The copy prepared for Greater Movie Season is a splendid corrective to be used against this sales resistance.

Information.

If an incomplete understanding of what the product advertised really is can be a sales resistance, then it must be remembered that the mere title and the mere listing of the cast is very often insufficient information. As anyone knows, the title alone can seldom give adequate understanding of what a photoplay is all about or why it is worth seeing. The manager who neglects to display posters, who neglects to display window cards, who neglects to display stills, who neglects to distribute heralds, and who uses a small newspaper advertisement carrying only the title, star, theatre name and play date, cannot expect prospective patrons to have a complete understanding of what it is that he is selling. Patrons must be given this information to correct that very dangerous sales resistance—ignorance or lack of information.

Dislike.

Another general sales resistance is dislike for some detail of what is being sold. This dislike might center on a personality involved. It might center on the establishment where the product is sold. It might center on previous experience with the product. Each of these points have a practical bearing for the theatre manager. For instance, a dislike might exist in the community for a certain star. In such a case patrons will not attend the theatre because of the mere announcement of the name of the star. Unless the manager can first remove this dislike even the most effective appeal will be useless. Consequently, he must not only know that the dislike exists but he must find out what caused the dislike. In some cases there is no real justification for the dislike because untrue rumor may be responsible. happens that newspaper gossip concerning a star has created an unfavorable feeling toward that star. It remains for the manager to remove this sales resistance by a direct attempt to first create a favorable attitude toward the star. It may be that the dislike was caused by the star's appearance in a certain type of photoplay or in a succession of photoplays that were below average. In this case something must be done to first create the impression either that the star is now appearing in a different type of photoplay or that, for very definite reasons which the manager presents in a convincing way, this latest photoplay reaches a high standard. It is ridiculous to go on blindly ignoring the dislike, and hope that it will not affect attendance. The sales resistance must first be removed before any general appeal can get results.

The Theatre.

This sales resistance based on personalities involved is not limited to the star or to the cast. The manager's personality and the personality of other members of the staff are possible sales resistances which should be given serious consideration. This introduces the theatre as a possible sales resistance.

Dislike for an establishment or for an institution will prevent sales no matter how well advertised a particular product is. As far as motion picture entertainment is concerned the opinion of the theatre is very important. There are situations where certain people would not visit a particular theatre no matter what program was booked and no matter how effectively that program was advertised. The theatre's location, the ventilation, the music, the projection, the service, the maintenance, and other details, all independent of the particular

program, can be sales resistances. Evidently such sales resistances must first be overcome before advertising for a particular program can be effective. It does seem strange that managers will sometimes go on in a rut, ignoring this sales resistance, and using expensive advertising which is really wasted because many for whom it is intended have a preconceived opinion of the theatre which prevents any appeal, centered on the program alone, from getting results.

Competitors.

Another important sales resistance is the habit of using a competitive product. This means, of course, as far as the motion picture theatre is concerned, the habit of attending the competitive theatre. The reasons that originally established this habit may no longer exist. The habit of theatre attendance at the competitive theatre might have been developed before the operation of your theatre reached its present standard. People may not know that conditions have changed and therefore that their preference is no longer justified. If such a habit does exist it is evident that before an advertising appeal for a particular program at your theatre can be effective, something must be done to break down the sales resistance that exists in the form of the habit explained. For this purpose a campaign on the advantages of your theatre must logically precede attempts to advertise a particular program. When the management of a particular theatre changes and when the operation is improved and when new equipment is installed, it is well to bring all this to the attention of people not regular patrons of your theatre who might otherwise go on believing that the theatre is as it was before the improvements were made.

The Program.

Besides these general sales resistances there arise particular objections for practically every program. In arranging advertising campaigns these objections should be anticipated. The appeal that you will use must be determined upon after you have taken into account the objections that will naturally arise in different minds at the mere mention of the title or the star or the cast. It is hard to convince a prejudiced mind. There-

fore, first break down the prejudice, remove the obstacle. To disregard a pre-conceived notion concerning a program and then attempt to drive home selling arguments in its favor, is like shouting to those who are stone deaf or like trying to drive nails into steel.

Appeals.

People may not attend the theatre to see a certain program because the advertising appeal directed to them was not effective as far as they were concerned. In other words, they were given an appeal which might have been effective with others but which with them was useless. It is evident that the same appeal cannot be used for every type of photoplay. It is also evident that for a particular photoplay different appeals are more effective for different people. Photoplays are prepared for national and even international showing. But people differ everywhere. It is practically impossible to select a general appeal that will be equally effective everywhere. Photoplays cannot be made with only one type of audience in mind. Nor can they be made for any one particular community.

The local manager must select that general appeal which will be most effective locally and then break that down into particular appeals for particular groups of his prospective customers. For instance, if a particular photoplay features new fashions, this is an appeal which is admittedly popular with women patrons and yet if this appeal were presented in advertising in a medium, the majority of whose readers were men, that particular appeal would not be effective with them. That same photoplay offers some other selling point which can be presented in mediums, the majority of whose readers are men.

Consider how different appeals can be directed to different groups for a particular photoplay. The cast may appeal to dyed-in-the-wool fans. The director because of previous photoplays that interested a certain group might be used to appeal to them. The star might have a known following in another group, and with that group the star appeal would be most effective. The photographic excellence of the production might be used for an appeal to a limited number who would visit the theatre because of this appeal rather than any other.

The fact that the photoplay was made from a locally popular novel will be the most effective appeal that could be directed to some. The locale of the story might have particular interest for a club or a society or even a group in the community. The story might center around a problem that has particular interest with a certain group and for them it is evident what appeal should be selected. There may be something that can be used in the advertising appeal that will reach the schools. There may be something for music lovers which would make a stronger appeal than anything else that might be selected.

Not only the feature photoplay but the news reel and the novelties can often be used to give a powerful advertising appeal that will be particularly effective in certain quarters.

There are some few photoplays that have a general appeal which will get results no matter to whom applied. But usually skillful selection of particular appeals will be necessary to build attendance above the average. It is evident that this selection of the proper appeal demands not only an understanding of a community, but also an understanding of the mediums of advertising that can be most effectively and most economically used to carry the appeal where it will do the most good. Although selective appeal seems so necessary, how often do we find the very same general appeal used for a wide variety of photoplays as if they were all exactly alike?

Standards.

There is an advantage in choosing what can be called selective appeals, and it is more than a mere advertising advantage. It lies in the attitude of the patron after the performance. If all programs are advertised with a similar general appeal rather than with a distinctive appeal, patrons get in the habit of estimating all photoplays according to some vague, general standard. Thus they compare the average feature photopaly with those few outstanding features which cannot be regularly produced. But if they have been brought to the theatre because of some distinctive appeal, they determine their satisfaction not in a vague, general way, but according to the way the photoplay has given them that limited, definite, distinctive, something which they came there to get. In other words,

advertising with distinctive appeals makes it easier to satisfy the patron. The patrons come to get something definite and when that definite something is received they are more likely to be satisfied than if brought to the theatre with the exaggerated statement that the particular feature is "the greatest photoplay ever produced." This very modest statement is so often used for so many photoplays that even Broadway, where expert advertisers show their skill, once blazed with four announcements for four different photoplays, each proclaimed "the greatest photoplay ever produced."

It is only fair to say that very often the dissatisfaction of patrons can be traced to theatre advertising. When theatre advertising is regularly heavy with superlatives and regularly emphatic in the statement that a particular photoplay excels any that was ever produced, it is inevitable that patrons coming with a high expectation which never can be practically realized will not only feel that they have been tricked, but will continue their habit of comparing a particular photoplay with an absolute standard. There is no absolute standard that can be applied to every photoplay. Theatre advertising should attempt to discourage such an impression. But in almost every photoplay there are distinctive details, high lights which have not appeared in other photoplays, and it is these that should be brought to the attention of prospective patrons. Very often a photoplay which when applied to some so-called "absolute standard of perfection" falls very far below that standard, will actually satisfy patrons more completely than a much heralded photoplay which seems closer to the so-called "absolute standard of perfection."

The answer to "Why patrons do not attend your theatre" may be traced to ignoring existing sales resistances that must be overcome before any advertising appeal can be effective. It may be traced also to the use of general appeals rather than selective appeals.

Not Only the Program.

The reason most generally given for unsatisfactory theatre attendance is "the quality of the program was inferior." It is true that attendance varies even in the best operated theatres

according to the quality of the program. Over the period of a year there can be a difference of 40% in the attendance for programs exceptionally strong and for programs exceptionally weak. But it is evidently unfair to attribute the low points in the yearly attendance chart exclusively to the grade of program shown. There may be other causes.

The careful manager searching for such causes might consider some of the following: Are there distinctive service features? Does the manager's appearance, manner and reputation keep people from the theatre? Does the cashier's inefficiency, discourtesy, appearance or reputation keep the patrons away? Is the service staff courteous, efficient, neat, alert, well informed? Is tipping permitted and is the tip actually necessary for satisfactory service? Is the personality or showmanship of the orchestra leader detrimental? Is the front of the theater attractive? Is lobby advertising adequate? Are theatre signs visible? Is marquee lettering effectively chosen?

Is the theatre location well known? Are program starting hours properly set and properly advertised? Are disturbing loiterers crowded around the theatre entrance? Is the box office easily accessible? Is the house properly ventilated? Are the chairs comfortable? Are questionable characters permitted in the theatre and do abuses exist? Are the rest rooms properly maintained and properly equipped? Does advertising reach prospective patrons on time? Are picture properly cued? Is music properly selected? Is orchestra music too loud? Is there sufficient variety in the programs? Are programs changed too often or not often enough? Is projection effective? Is theatre lighting adequate? Is detrimental word-of-mouth comment circulating concerning any details of operation? Is the theatre considered too high-brow for the community?

Is the theatre considered too sensational? Are the same stars shown too often? Are society pictures in the majority when the community wants westerns? When program changes are made three or four times during the week, is the proper picture booked for the proper days? Is anything done to develop new patrons? Is the competitive theatre giving more for the money? Does the community believe that pictures are shown at your theatre too long after they are shown at similar theatres

in other cities? Does screen advertising keep patrons away? Do the women feel that the theatre is operated for them? Is sufficient attention given to seasonal changes in lighting and decoration?

Questions like the above might be multiplied almost indefinitely. The point that is being made here is that unsatisfactory theatre attendance should not be attributed exclusively to the photoplay. There should be a regular, careful, thorough analysis following some well-ordered plan which will bring to the attention of the management the existence of conditions and deficiencies which are preventing attendance.

Conclusion.

The next thing to knowing how to attract patronage is to know what keeps patronage away. Usually the second must be understood before the first is possible. It does not suffice to determine causes of unsatisfactory attendance once and then expect that the matter is settled forever. Almost every week new sales resistances arise. Consequently, the management must be always on the alert. A small mistake if remedied in time will save greater loss later on. In this connection it is well to suggest that not only the manager but every member of the staff should be alert to detect reasons with an answer to "Why People Do Not Attend Your Theatre." Suggestions from all possible sources should be encouraged. The manager who stays at his desk and uses his energy in complaining about the quality of programs available, may often find that this energy could be better used in careful, thorough, regular analysis of other factors that affect theatre attendance.

CHAPTER XI

ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING is the "life and breath and soul of the amusement business." A larger percentage of the gross of the amusement business is devoted to advertising than is devoted in any other business. No business advertises through a greater variety of mediums. This makes advertising an important consideration for the theatre manager.

Motion picture theatre advertising has been much criticised. For instance, a comparison between the typical amusement page advertisements and those on other pages of the newspaper often shows glaring ignorance of elementary principles of advertising. There may be some excuse for the inferior quality of amusement page advertising. Other advertising is prepared by agencies where a staff of experts give their attention to different details. At the theatre, the busy manager with one hundred other worries must do the work that elsewhere is done by trained experts. Even in theatres where there is an advertising manager, he must at the same time be layout man, copy writer and very often illustrator. Besides, theatre advertising must be hurriedly prepared. Such hurried work is seldom demanded of advertising experts in other lines. Moreover, those experts are concentrating on the same one product, while the product of the theatre manager is constantly changing. Despite such handicaps, theatre advertising is making rapid progress. It remains for the theatre manager to learn all that he can about principles of advertising which apply to every advertised product and especially those that apply to the product of the theatre.

Advertising as applied to the theatre is by no means limited to newspaper advertisements, lobby display, the use of the screen, bill boards, street ballyhoos, window displays and the countless other sales promotion activities which are practiced every day. Advertising has an even broader scope. Practically every detail of operation has an advertising influence—

the personality of the manager, the cleanliness of the house, comfort of the seats, the courtesy of the personnel, lighting of the theatre, the perfection of projection, the music, niceties of service, ventilation, and all those things, which by experience and comment help to form the public's impression of the theatre, must be considered. The formal advertising is only a partial influence, so when considering the efficiency of your advertising consider every detail of operation and not only the formal advertising.

Every point of contact with customers offers an advertising possibility. A big department store listed all the influences that helped to bring customers to the institution and found that less than 3 per cent were methods of advertising which was actually paid for as advertising. The list included such things as noiseless hinges on the door, plate glass on show cases, neat uniforms of drivers, courtesies of telephone operators, the salute of the page boy, courtesy and efficiency of sales girls, freeing the sidewalk from ice and snow immediately after a storm, announcements of elevator starters, the method of package wrapping, etc. The very minuteness of the summary showed how carefully advertising influences can be calculated. The theatre manager should be just as careful in his calculation. He is wrong to limit consideration of advertising influences to formal advertising alone.

No other business uses as many different advertising mediums as the motion picture theatre. This does not mean possible points of contact that have an advertising influence, but rather formal sales promotion activities whose prime purpose is advertising. The use of each of these mediums deserves special consideration. But there are certain advertising principles that apply to all methods of formal advertising as practiced in every business. The product of a motion picture theatre does differ from other products. But do not shut your eyes to what can be learned concerning advertising from any other business and justify this by the statement, "The amusement business is different from any other." Of course it is different. But all business has much in common and any business, including the amusement business, will advance as it adopts efficient practices from others.

Advertising Is a Science.

The influence of advertising in our daily lives is evident from considering how many nationally known products have reached general use through skillful advertising. Trade-marks are really by-words in our daily lives. They became such by advertising. We are awakened by a Big Ben, shaved with a Gillette, brush our teeth with a Prophylactic toothbrush, dress in trade-marked clothes, breakfast on trade-marked cereals, trade-marked bacon and trade-marked coffee sweetened with trade-marked sugar. Then we go on our trade-marked way through the day.

In the past twenty-five years the development of advertising has been phenomenal. We find in one year the national advertising budget totals many, many million dollars. A single page in one issue of a national magazine costs eight thousand dollars. It is unanimously agreed that effective advertising is essential for the success of any business.

Advertising has become a science. Every science requires serious study. It is not something with a knowledge of which a man is born. Almost every one feels that they know a little about advertising. But an advertising expert has said: "Yes, people generally feel that they know a little about advertising, just as they know a little about electricity—just enough to get hurt." He pointed out that because advertising is a science with a definite, specialized technique, it is mastered only by serious thinking. This applies to the theatre manager. In fact, he must do more thinking than others because of his difficult problems. If he cannot be—and is not expected to be—an advertising expert, he should at least be familiar with elementary principles because he is responsible for the investment of considerable money and time for advertising.

Theories.

It is easy to get tangled up in theories of advertising. Shelves upon shelves in libraries groan under the weight of big volumes on advertising theory.

One of the nation's leading advertising experts said, in referring to theory: "Advertising theory is a fine thing, but

it can be boiled down to very simple principles which, plus good common sense, plus hard work, plus a maximum of thinking, get results." Another advertising expert, when asked for his rule of success in advertising, said: "Think, think, think."

There are definitions of advertising. For instance:-

Advertising is "Salesmanship in print" or "A business influence which through expression sells or helps to sell, strengthens reputation and develops good will," or "An interpretation to potential customers of the advantages of a product or a service," or "Shaping an idea for the purpose of attracting attention, arousing desire and producing action." But note that every good definition emphasizes the fact that the purpose of advertising is to make sales. Its purpose is to develop the sales habit, for it is not so much the initial purchase as the habit of repeated purchase that is desired. Consequently, there is only one test of the improved efficiency of any advertising—"MORE RESULTS FOR LESS MONEY EXPENDED."

Three Important Steps.

There are three steps in advertising—winning attention convincing-moving to action. Any one of the three without the others is not sufficient. Unless an advertisement gets attention, no matter how good it is, it is wasted. The greater number of possible customers whose attention is won, the more effective is the advertisement as far as the first step is concerned. However, winning attention is only the first step. The second is carrying conviction. Conviction does not depend entirely upon so-called "reasons why" or arguments that appeal to the intellect. The appeal can be made to the emotions and convictions thus secured. The third step is moving to action. The customer must not be allowed to slip away or forget. The final urge which makes the purchase These three steps are given here for the is necessary. theatre manager because they offer a means of judging the efficiency of an advertisement by asking the questions, "Does it win attention?—Does it carry conviction?—Does it sell tickets?"

Preliminary Analysis.

All advertising requires an analysis of the product, an analysis of the customer, an analysis of the available advertising mediums. For this, hard thinking is necessary. No short cut substitute exists. The manager who starts advertising a program before he really understands what it is he is selling, is trying to do the impossible. If he tries to advertise to a community without knowing its habits and preferences, its interests and prejudices, its language and mode of daily life—all in relation to what he is selling—he is trying to do the impossible. If he has not studied the different advertising mediums, the cost and coverage of each, and then selected what will give him the most return on the dollar invested, he cannot advertise efficiently.

In making the analysis questions like the following might be asked:

To whom is the message directed?

What am I trying to make people believe?

What details should be emphasized to get the best results?

What style of language is most effective?

What do my customers already know about what I am selling?

What are the possible objections in their minds that must be overcome?

This analysis is made by advertisers for other products on the market. The very nature of the product advertised by the theatre manager makes an analysis even more necessary. He has a limited period of time to get his returns. There are no bargain sales, no cut-rate escapes to help cover up the waste of poor advertising. The theatre manager has only one chance with each program. If he errs once, there is no opportunity to recover loss because of his mistakes. Besides, every program is different. This means that the theatre manager must work harder as far as analyzing the product is concerned. He must work harder as far as analyzing the prospect is concerned. The preferences of a community are constantly changing, and dif-

terent appeals must be made for different programs. Analysis of available advertising mediums is also more important to him than to others, because he must consider so many mediums and his advertising budget is more limited.

Sex.

Advertising which ignores the sex and the age of the prospect to whom an appeal is directed is seldom effective. As far as sex is concerned we know that different appeals are more effective with women than with men. The majority of motion picture theatre patrons are women. Moreover, the attendance of men is often determined by the preference of the lady escorted to the theatre. Consequently, motionpicture theatre advertising in many cases should be focused with feminine appeal. The manager understands masculine appeal. The majority of studio directors are men. Yet here we have a product which, to be effectively merchandised. must consider feminine appeal. The masculine viewpoint and the feminine viewpoint are not identical. Women generally react to appeals that men ignore. An appeal that would be effective with men very often would not convince women. Conviction is not a matter of rational argument alone. The imagination and the emotion play an important part. Once imagination and emotion are considered, it is more clearly evident that feminine appeal and the masculine appeal vary.

Feminine Appeal.

Men generally are more convinced by advertising which is concise, matter-of-fact, "hard-headed" and emphatic in details of service, durability, fact, etc. Women are impressed by details of appearance, by appeals to sentiment and romance, by novelty and individuality of fashions, etc. Their interest in romance, the home, the delicate and nice, reaches a level that is not generally reached by men. To make this point clear take an instance right from theatre operation. Is it not true that women patrons notice and appreciate little courtesies and attentions of the theatre staff more than men do? They notice also tidiness, color harmony, other decorative features and the so-called "pretty touches" around the theatre.

Managers can sense definite reaction from women patrons to incidents on the screen which men seldom notice. Women with a keener eye for details notice many defects which slipped by observant masculine eyes at the studio—for instance, satin, high-heeled, jeweled slippers on the servant girl in the kitchen scene, an evening gown worn by a paragon of social perfection at afternoon tea, change of costume in a sequence which allowed no time for such a change, a wedding ring slipped on the third finger, an American two-cent stamp on a letter mailed in France, blunders in etiquette by the screen character who is playing the natural part of a perfect society matron, calling a pearl necklace the "diamond jewels" in a sub-title.

The alert theatre manager often uses such things as these to build attendance—strange to say. He arranges a contest with a prize to the lady patron who discovers the inaccuracy. Of course, he does it delicately. Not in the least does he imply that some one has blundered, but rather gives the impression that, perhaps, it was all intended, and that its detection is an indication of how well-informed lady patrons of his theatre are on the subject of, for instance, etiquette.

Therefore, if, within the theatre, women react to things that men generally do not notice, it is natural to suppose that to attract women patrons to the theatre certain advertising appeals must be used which would not be effective if theatre advertising were directed exclusively to men. Theatre attendance depends very much upon women, and therefore theatre advertising in its appeal should never overlook the feminine viewpoint.

Age.

As far as age is concerned, it must never be forgotten that mental age is quite different from actual age. To ignore the mental age of your prospects often means that you are talking above their heads and in an unknown language to those who simply cannot be convinced by a message they do not understand. The mental age of the manager is no criterion of the mental age of his prospective patrons. Actual age is also important. Many a family visits the theatre because one of

its younger members has been "sold" on a particular program or a particular theatre. The children of your community are so many missionaries broadcasting the theatre's message. Ignore these younger members and you cut off one of the theatre's most potent influences for attendance.

Reliability.

The confidence of customers in the truth and reliability of theatre advertising is essential. When customers cease to believe in the reliability of theatre advertising, then that advertising might as well stop. Deception and exaggeration and falsehood may succeed once, but the institution that deceives is ever afterward at a disadvantage.

"Truth in advertising" is the slogan of the advertising clubs of the world. Every theatre manager should live up to this slogan, because in this matter the theatre business is no different from others. Bombast, exaggeration, superlatives, high-sounding generalities are not justified for theatre advertising. Such practice might have prevailed for circus advertising and it might be justified in some ways. The circus came to town but once each year. It did not attempt to establish patronage on a permanent basis. Consequently, exaggeration and glaring superlatives did not have the same disastrous effect that they have on the business of institutions which are permanent in a community. The circus with its exaggerated advertising aimed for every possible admission, knowing that by the time it returned next year the majority would have forgotten that its advertising exaggeration were not justified by the facts. Here is the modest heading of a typical circus advertisement:

"Greatest, most gigantic, most stupendous, glittering, sensational, marvelous, glorious, prodigious, most amazing, majestic, astounding, unequalled—all these do not do justice to the countless wonders of the '. circus.'"

Exaggerations and unjustifiable superlatives have no place in theatre advertising. Attempts to gain temporary success by deceiving a gullible portion of the public will never be feasible for any permanent institution.

Moreover, the public is not as gullible as some would believe. Exaggerated theatre advertising is not believed as completely as those who are responsible for it like to imagine. The public is not as innocent or as ignorant or as weak in memory as the exaggerators think. Any degree of intelligence is offended by the repetition of the statement, "The greatest production ever made," when that statement is generously applied to every other photoplay. Superlatives are easily picked. It is not hard to write the word "most" before any adjective. Real skill comes in selecting an advertising message that is convincing and yet not exaggerated. Sometimes, reliability in advertising is not practiced because of sheer laziness. It takes hard work to make advertising convincing and also true—it is very, very easy to string out glittering superlatives. Dictionaries are cheap. The word "greatest" is so abused that as used by some it indicates the absence even of a dictionary.

Brevity.

Busy people today have no time for long-winded statements. They want to get your message in a flash. Solid blocks of type discourage readers. The competition for attention is so keen that the brief message, because it demands less time and attention, is noticed when others are not. Consider, in this regard, the advertising of well-known national products. See how much they do with an illustration and a slogan. There is a general movement in modern advertising towards brevity and intensity. Of course, the national advertising of standard products in many cases is reminder advertising. This can naturally be more brief than theatre advertising which is introducing an unknown program. But, nevertheless, the principle of brevity is important for the theater manager. He, too, must follow the precept—"Use the fewest possible words to say what must be said."

Visual Appeal.

Twenty years ago illustrations in advertisements were not common. Today, the illustration is so important that highsalaried artists of the world are doing commercial art work. It has often been said that "An illustration, if it is the right illustration, is worth a thousand words." We are living in a picture-minded age. Pride in his power of expression often tempts a theatre manager to use too many words and no cut where an illustration would be more effective. The power of the illustrated appeal in advertising adds a new importance to the advertising material supplied the theatre—lobby cards, window photographs, posters, heralds, cuts and other illustrated advertising material which is not as generally used as its effectiveness deserves.

The Merely Clever Advertisement.

An advertisement that is merely clever may attract and amuse many, yet not make a single sale. If the purpose of advertising were to entertain and not sell, a merely clever advertisement would be justified. Of course, other things being equal, the advertisement with the laugh gets better results. But you want the reader to remember not the laugh, but the necessity to buy. The more an advertisement calls attention to its cleverness, the less it attracts attention to what is being sold. Common sense appeal is not consistent with amusing tricks and frills and shallow novelties that are merely clever.

Enthusiasm.

Readers immediately detect in an advertisement its writer's insincerity, lack of confidence and lack of enthusiasm. Unless you believe in the product that you are advertising and believe that it is really doing a worth-while thing for those who will use it, your message will lack a vital, convincing appeal. If you believe that you have something worth selling, this belief will give a persuasive tone and warmth to your message that reaches out to the readers like the handshake of a friend and carries the same enthusiasm.

The manager who starts preparing an advertisement thinking "This is just another moving picture—it bored me to death—I don't see why they made it, etc.," might as well not advertise. There is no motion picture so bad that it does not contain something which will attract the interest of patrons and bring happiness into their lives. Besides, the manager is not selling entertainment for himself. If you have become hardened

by many years of experience, perhaps pictures may have become "old stuff" to you. But look at it from the patron's viewpoint. Approach each picture to be advertised with a fresh mind. Try to see what there is in it that the average patron would enjoy. Pick that out and tell about it. Your skill is not shown in advertising big pictures with well-known stars or photoplays that seem exceptional according to your idea—but selling the seemingly weaker pictures. They all have something which can be played up. Work yourself into the realization of this and of the fact that tired people really need the happiness which a theatre visit can give, and let your enthusiasm show itself in your copy. Keep in mind that tired people need entertainment as much as they need food. They are not "fed up" on photoplays as you may be.

Don't Tell It All.

Skillful advertising selects distinctive features of a product, focuses the advertising appeal on these and omits others. You cannot tell everything about any product-especially a theatre program. You must hint and suggest and tickle the curiosity. This requires judicious selection. It is not how much can be said, but rather what to select of the many things that might be said, which is important. If the theatre manager gives the synopsis of the photoplay in full detail, he spoils the patron's entertainment. Much of the patron's pleasure comes from supense and surprise. The most superior photoplay ever made sounds very ordinary in a "complete" five-hundred word synopsis. Therefore, pick out that distinctive something about the picture which makes it different from any other-that something which beyond all others will appeal most to your prospects-present that in a way that attracts attention, awakens curiosity, convinces the patron that he ought to see it, and brings him right to the box office.

Timeliness.

Timely advertising takes an existing season, or an existing fad, or an existing sentiment, interest or mental attitude and ties the message of the product in with this, so that an impetus is gotten for the product from the already awakened

interest. In many photoplays there is a problem or a situation or a character or a locale that can be easily connected with something that is then of general interest in the community. When this is tied in with the advertising message, the latter does not have to awaken interest where no interest existed, but capitalizes on the already awakened interest. Every local holiday, even outstanding local events, present some detail which is of timely interest, and when linked to an advertising message gives it an added appeal. In other words, find out what people locally are interested in or what they are then discussing and direct that existing interest towards some detail of what you are advertising. The already awakened interest has a momentum on which your message can ride to greater effectiveness than if you had first tried to awaken a new interest.

Seasonal appeal is also important. The feelings and the sentiment of people change according to the seasons, and the very same product advertised in different seasons should be differently advertised so that in each case the seasonal possibilities are used. This applies particularly to seasonal advertising for the theatre, irrespective of the program booked.

Repetition.

Advertising has been compared to rolling a barrel up a hill. If you once stop advertising, down come the results that you have built up. This calls attention to the fact that repeated advertising develops a certain momentum or a series movement which becomes stronger as the series grows. In each unit of the series there should be a permanent element. Permanent elements may be the slogan, the trade-mark, the tone of the message, the type of illustration, the general layout, location on the page and many other things which serve as reminders of the message carried in previous ads. This makes it possible for the theatre to get the strength of the series even if the programs are changing.

Repetition does not here imply that there should be a continual increase in expenditure. In fact, a certain momentum is developed by previous effort so that previous units in a series exercise an influence which make possible a reduction in

expenditure. Theatre managers who advertise only the program with no permanent element, to give every advertisement the appearance of being a unit in a series, find themselves with the barrel at the bottom of the hill at each change of program. Use some permanent elements in every theatre advertisement by which all your advertising can be recognizable. Then at the end of the year you capitalize on past expenditures because an impression has been created and a momentum developed.

Advertising Is Not a Cure-all.

Advertising cannot do the impossible. It has its limitations. No matter how skillfully presented, it cannot get permanent results for an inferior product. Evidently there is no constant relation between expenditure and results. Up to a certain point advertising is effective. Beyond that point the effectiveness of even the most skillful advertising begins to diminish. It is just as faulty to over-advertise as it is to advertise insufficiently. Failure to realize this has been a cause of waste of money invested in advertising.

Theatre managers who hold to the belief that 10% of gross receipts is the correct ratio for advertising expenditure are wrong. Even if it were found that the motion picture theatres of the country averaged for advertising 10% of the entire gross, this would not justify any theatre manager setting down the fixed rule that his advertising must be 10% of his anticipated gross. Local conditions alone can determine the proper expenditure. It is evident that newly established theatres will at first require larger advertising budgets than are required after a period of operation. The manager who sits back satisfied with the statement "my advertising expenditure is under the 10% ratio" may not realize that 1% would be the correct ratio for his theatre. Many factors, such as competitor practices, coverage, efficiency of mediums, residence of prospects, regular patronage, etc., must be considered. Not only is there no direct ratio between guaranteed results and advertising expenditure, but also, no one can prove that as the advertising expenditure increases beyond a certain point, so will the receipts.

Simplicity.

Your message should be brought down to the intelligence of your readers. You are not selling to yourself. The effect of the message upon you is no measure of how it will influence others. Consider each detail from the viewpoint of your average customer. Speak his language. Select the appeal that will interest him, whether it interests you or not. Strive for simplicity. Fancy adjectives, unknown terms, high-brow language may flatter your pride. But if simple people cannot understand your message, then your efforts are wasted. Effective simplicity is much harder to attain than elaborate, complicated, lengthiness—but the results justify the effort it requires.

Quality.

Every advertising detail helps to create an impression. If all details are in good taste, tidy and clean, the impression created is that the institution or the product has quality. A poorly lighted marquee, carelessly hung lobby frames, smudged newspaper advertisements, poorly projected trailers, torn and dirty posters, untidy window displays, all create a bad impression, no matter how exceptional the quality of what is advertised. In this connection, theatre managers should remember that the majority of patrons are women. Women respond to what is neat and dainty. Notice how carefully national advertisements which appeal to women have in neatness and daintiness the quality appeal.

Negative Copy.

The ultimate purpose of an advertisement is to get movement—the movement to purchase. Negative copy has a tendency to stop movement rather than encourage it. The negative command "Don't miss it" seems to strike against our natural unconscious resistance to being commanded. Such commands put us on the defensive. It is better to coax. Avoid the noisy negative command. Strive for polite intimacy, the invitation appeal, the coaxing "Let's go" tone which is more likely to bring on your prospect than is the negative statement or command.

Variety of Appeal.

The same general message becomes less effective if readers for whom it is intended vary in age, condition of life, preference, education, etc. You cannot expect to reach all groups of patrons most effectively with the same message. The very same program must be merchandized differently to different elements in your community. Distinctive sales values should be selected for each group. Some will be attracted by one appeal, some by others. The very tone and expression of the message for different groups should be different. The selling approach must be varied. There must be special appeals. The theatre's product is too varied to expect that the same standardized appeal can always be used.

Ideas.

Daily life is really an education in advertising for the theatre manager. He is surrounded on every side by helpful advertising lessons. Well-known advertising experts admit that they study the work of others. Some keep scrap books with samples of effective advertising. Their practice carries a lesson for the theatre manager.

The theatre manager who relies on his own ideas and keeps his eyes closed to what others are doing is seriously handicapped. He has up-to-the-minute text books of advertising in the form of the trade papers, the amusement pages of other cities, the advertising in the national magazines and all local advertising.

Your Product.

But in studying the advertising of other products, remember that what you sell is different from other products. You sell nothing that is wrapped up and carried away. You do not sell a luxury that is purchased but once. You do not appeal to a selected group or to those of a particular social status, nor to the wealthy alone, nor the poor alone, nor to women alone, nor to men alone, nor to children alone.

Your product is not seasonal in the sense that sales are limited to certain periods of the year. You have not a standard

product which does not change. Competitor theatres are often selling what seems much like what you have to advertise. These and many other conditions make it evident that the product merchandized by the manager differs from others that he sees advertised. But beneath all advertising are certain general principles. It remains for the theatre manager who studies all forms of advertising to master these principles, select what will be useful and disregard what is not applicable for motion picture theatre advertising.

Sales Activities.

The sales activities of the theatre manager have been called by the terms exploitation, publicity, and advertising. All three serve the same purpose—to sell seats. Nothing is gained by disputing whether any one activity should be called exploitation or advertising or publicity. It is not easy to settle the full meaning of any one of the three or limit the use of any one term to certain activities. Confusion is inevitable. For instance, if exploitation is limited to intensive and exceptional sales promotion, who will draw the line between the exceptional and the ordinary? Who will draw the line between publicity and advertising? Disputes about the boundaries of these are impractical. The term "sales activities" includes all three.

There are certain considerations to be applied to every sales activity. The manager's full purpose is not limited to selling a particular program. Therefore he must do nothing in selling one program that will interfere with selling future programs. Misrepresentations and exaggerations might build receipts for one program at the cost of injuring future attendance, because advertising would thereafter be distrusted. Not temporary but permanent advantages must be considered.

Selection.

No sales activity should be used without considering three things—the type of community, the type of production, and the policy of the theatre for which it will be used. The sales activity that was most effective for another community might be useless, or even detrimental, when used elsewhere. In the very same community, an activity that was effective for one type of program might be useless when applied to another. Even the same photoplay advertised for different theatres in the same community will sometimes require different sales activities. Blind imitation of what others have used effectively is never justified. The three elements that determine selection should be considered.

Good Taste.

Every sales activity should be in good taste. This does not mean that it should be over-artistic, over-refined, over-dignified. An activity that offends good taste does not build patronage. In fact, it hurts attendance not only at the program for which it was intended, but at others playing the theatre later.

Certain practices inherited from circus days or from early nickelodeon days are no longer in good taste. A manager playing a fire photoplay who has the fire engines race past the theatre to answer a false alarm in the neighborhood is not using good judgment. This might promote business, but when the responsibility is centered on the theatre, a poor impression is created among those who were inconvenienced, including, of course, those whose taxes pay for such expense.

If you were managing not a local institution but a fly-bynight enterprise, the "Try-and-get-away-with-it" policy might be justified. But good taste for the sales activity of the modern motion picture theatre is absolutely necessary. No rule except the application of good common sense will determine the good taste of a particular activity.

Word-of-Mouth.

Word-of-mouth advertising is the by-product of all sales promotion. The more extended and intense the word-of-mouth advertising stimulated by any activity the more effective it is. In choosing any sales promotion activity, always keep in mind its possible word-of-mouth influence and try to include some detail that will stimulate word-of-mouth comment. How powerful an influence such comment can be is not generally appreciated. But consider its effect at a theatre where the program remains unchanged through the week. If the program is above the average, there is a gradual increase each day as the week goes on. If the program is below the average, and even if a record attendance is attracted for the opening day, there is a gradual falling off each day as the week goes on. Word-of-mouth comment is the principal influence which makes the difference.

Remember always that not only those who are reached directly and immediately by your sales activity but others to whom they might talk, are your objective. It is evident that if you had to choose between two activities, each involving the same expenditure of time and effort, you would choose the one that would stimulate wider word-of-mouth comment. The screen and the theatre program can be used to stimulate comment of patrons who have already seen the program. They are your best advertisers. Remind them of interesting highlights of the program that they can discuss with their friends. Some theatres have wall panels near the exist asking patrons to tell their friends about the program.

Not only the program, but the theatre itself, is a subject of comment that influences attendance. You never realize how much people discuss a theatre until you mingle with them. They have many misconceptions which persist because they were never cleared up. For instance, they might believe that the release date for the community theatre is far behind that of other places. This might have started when some one remarked that a picture that was shown in a nearby city a year ago did not as yet play the theatre. They do not know about the road showing of certain pictures. But the opinion was

spread by gossip until it was generally believed that the local theatre was "behind the times."

The question of admission price is often discussed. An opinion detrimental to the theatre will spread after some one gossips that similar theatres in other sections charge much less for the same program. Of course they do not consider that the smaller admission price was asked at a theatre showing second run. When admission prices are increased, people do not realize that increased rental was demanded. Some of the public believe that all programs cost the same and that increase in admission is simply the attempt of the manager to extort what is not justified. Gossip can spread such an opinion. These are but a few of the subjects which might be commented on and affect attendance. Do not ignore such comment. Correct it when it is detrimental. Help to spread it when it is favorable.

To increase the possibility of word-of-mouth comment some managers of smaller theatres use "One Cent Tickets." About one hundred of these are distributed and good only before one o'clock on the opening day of a program. Their distribution may be arranged as part of a co-operative advertising campaign so that merchants can sell the "One Cent Tickets" at the stores to attract customers. The value of the special ticket is evidently to get people to the theatre who will spread word-of-mouth comment early enough in the program run to influence patronage.

Selection of Sales Activities.

In selecting sales activities, consider the expenditure of time and money involved in relation to the possible return. This can never be calculated exactly. Advertising returns can never be forecast exactly for any product, least of all for entertainment.

But questions such as the following might be asked:

What material is necessary?
Will it be available and what technical details are involved for its display?
How will its distribution be managed?

What coverage will it have?

How will it duplicate other sales activities?

What can it do that no other sales activity can do?

How long in advance of play date should it be started?

Is it intended for the regular patron, or the occasional or the transient?

Will it appeal primarily to men, women or children?

Is it appropriate for the season of the year?

Has it been used recently by this theatre or a competitor theatre?

Does it offer a competitor the chance to steal its thunder? (This applies especially to teaser advertising.)

How can its results be gauged?

Where can it be used to best advantage? What possible emergencies might arise to make its use ineffective?

How can it be tied up with something of local interest?

Results.

No theatre is regularly playing to its maximum capacity at every performance. Even if it were, extra performances might be added. If no more performances could be crowded into each day there is the possibility of increased admission. So do not use the results of previous years as your goal. Do not feel that there is just so much money in the community that will be expended for motion picture entertainment, and that intensive activity will never bring more to the box office. If pioneers in the business had believed in limiting their efforts because they felt that there was a limit to possible receipts, the business would not have developed as it has. Intensive activity has often brought considerable increase in receipts after it was believed "the top has been reached."

How can the efficiency of advertising be determined? Is there such a thing as perfect advertising or a perfect advertising campaign? It is evident that we would have perfection if absolute maximum results were attained at absolute minimum expenditure. However, no human being can determine whether any advertising or any advertising campaign is perfect, because it is impossible to calculate absolute maximum results in relation to absolute minimum costs.

Can improvement in advertising be calculated? It is evident that the real test of advertising is the results achieved. Therefore, as far as improvement is concerned, the calculation of improvement can be "greater results at less cost" provided that the same conditions exist for the two periods which are compared. Identity of conditions can not be considered too strictly because it is obvious that there will be some changes, either in programs or in weather, or in competitive activity, or in any of the many other factors which influence theatre attendance. Consequently, although no absolutely accurate decision can be made concerning improvement in advertising, it is, nevertheless, feasible to make regular comparison between similar periods as far as results are concerned in relation to actual expenditure. By results must be understood not only immediate sales but ultimate sales, which can be traced to the efficiency of advertising. As far as the cost is concerned, this matter is not limited to the dollars and cents expenditure. It is evident that the time and effort involved must also be considered. Hence a cost factor is involved which might be overlooked by simply considering the dollars and cents investment as limited to the cost of materials or the cost of mediums.

Ideas.

There must be a variety of sales activities used. You cannot keep ringing the changes on half a dozen ideas month in and month out. Least of all can you confine your efforts to newspaper advertising. Variety is necessary. Try different ideas. For varied and novel ideas you cannot rely entirely upon your own ingenuity. The most fertile brain will run dry of ideas. Keep a record of usable advertising ideas. This can be added to as new ideas are evolved. The problem of

arranging these ideas so that they can be referred to readily is difficult. Without convenient arrangement they would make only a collection useless because confusing. They cannot be arranged according to type of production, stars, type of patrons for whom intended, without using cross references which would be intricate.

Sales activities discussed in the following chapters will be grouped according to the place where they function. This grouping makes it possible to refer conveniently to ideas summarized in each group when arranging a campaign because most campaigns are planned according to coverage. There are five general divisions as follows:

- 1. Sales activities within the theatre.
- 2. Sales activities in the lobby.
- 3. Sales activities on the streets.
- 4. Sales activities in co-operation with merchants, societies, clubs, libraries, schools, etc.
- Sales activities in co-operation with newspapers, such as contests, essays, co-operative advertising pages, etc.

The above arrangement does not include marquee advertiseing, the display and the directory newspaper advertisement, and amusement page "readers," which are given separate treatment in following chapters.

CHAPTER XII

ADVERTISING MATERIALS

BUILDING theatre patronage depends very much upon the skillful use of advertising materials. The advertising materials supplied the theatre manager are known by the trade names—"advertising accessories" and "ad sales items." These include as items regularly available—the posters, banners, heralds, window photos, lobby photos, rotogravures, stills, and also the electros and mats for newspaper and house program reproduction. They include, too, the specialties which are occasionally available, such as coins, tape measures, wedding rings, pennants, cut-out dolls, buttons, feathers, caps, calling cards, tops, booklets, miniature brooms, souvenir postcards, door knob hangers, etc.

The manufacturer and distributor of any widely retailed product tries to assist the retailer by supplying advertising materials, and by making it possible for the retailer to tie-in with national advertising of the product. This advertising material is generally called "dealer helps." Any retailer, no matter what he sells, who ignores this advertising material, and who fails to tie-in with national advertising, is simply refusing assistance.

Necessity.

In no other business is the retailer given as much assistance as is the theatre manager. The burden of advertising is shared to a great extent by the producer-distributor. The very nature of the product retailed at the theatre makes advertising materials indispensable. The variety of advertising materials supplied the theatre manager and their uniform excellence has often been commended by advertising experts outside of the industry. Yet this material is not as widely used as it deserves to be. Its excellence and its full value are not properly appreciated. Its full possibilities for use are not generally understood.

Your Salesmen.

The theatre manager has not a staff of salesmen such as some other retailers have. His salesmen are really the advertising materials he uses. The very nature of the product he sells demands intensive selling. This intensive selling cannot be done by salesmen meeting prospective patrons. Advertising materials are the salesmen—really the traveling salesmen—of the theatre. When prospective patrons meet no "salesmen" of a program, how can they be sold? Advertising materials must cover a market just as "salesmen" do. If the coverage is not complete, if insufficient material is used, it is certain that sales will be lost.

If advertising materials are so many salesmen of the theatre. and if selling must be intensive—what of the advertising materials? They must be novel and varied. They must be fresh and clean and neat. They must appear wherever there are prospects to be sold. Competition is keen and your "salesmen" have a real job. Not only are rival theatres bidding for attendance, but people everywhere are surrounded by a clamor of advertising calling for attention. Theatre advertising that is only a whisper will be lost in the general noise. Although people need entertainment, there are competitors of motion picture entertainment, such as radio, dance halls, phonographs. automobiles, night clubs, amusement parks, concerts and others-all making a noisy bid for public attention. This selling emphasis must be met by the theatre. You cannot expect people in the face of such competition to come down to the theatre and ask about the program. Of course some few will do this. But theatres cannot prosper on the few patrons who are selling themselves. Your advertising materials must do the selling.

No Easier Way.

It is ridiculous to neglect advertising materials in the hope that the newspaper advertisement will suffice. Of course, it is easier to send down to the newspaper office a few lines of copy and a general idea of the program and have someone in the composing room prepare the layout for your theatre advertisement in the newspaper. This work is done by someone else and the results are usually in proportion to the extent of the manager's own energy expended. Effective use of the ad sales items demands ingenuity and hard work from the manager. This material comes to him with layout and copy prepared, but it remains for him to determine methods of distribution, choice of location, adaptation of the material to local conditions and novel display. Because such efforts are required, the neglect of ad sales items can often be traced to the laziness of those who prefer, "the easier way." You cannot get advertising material to do real selling for you without hard work on your part, any more than you can get salesmen to sell intensively unless you inspire them.

The standard advertising materials should be appreciated. Their general excellence is something that should make us proud of the industry. Consider that about 70 distinct items must be prepared for every feature photoplay. Every photoplay demands different treatment. General excellence is secured despite the fact that the material is prepared against time, to have it available for release date all over the country. If 70 distinct items must be prepared for every feature and a company releases 40 features in a six months period, the magnitude of the undertaking makes its excellence all the more remarkable.

Prepared for the Theatre.

This material is prepared with just one purpose in mind—to get more people into your theatre. In fact, from the moment that a story is selected for production down through every step of its making, one objective is kept in mind—building theatre patronage. The manager is the last link in a long chain that stretches from the author's desk to the public. Everything depends upon the manager's contact with the public, and this depends on the use of advertising materials.

All possible care is given to making advertising materials most helpful for the theatre. The selling angles of every production are kept in mind when the advertising material is prepared. A staff of skilled experts—artists, layout men and copy experts—select, design and prepare the material. From

about 1,000 stills, advertising experts select the selling ideas. These selling ideas pass through the steps of layout, photoengraving, electrotyping, lithographing and printing. Famous artists are employed whose names are a by-word in commercial art. The most improved mechanical processes are used to keep this material up to standard.

Quality.

These experts are working for the theatre manager. It is beyond the hopes of very many managers to hire such artists, or to hire even one of the many advertising experts who cooperate in the preparation of any one piece of advertising material. The expensive photo-engraving and lithographing and printing are beyond the budget possibilities of any theatre. Because of quantity purchase, a cost is possible which would not be possible if material of the same quality were ordered in the small quantity required for one theatre or a few theatres. Consequently, the policy of having substitute material prepared locally does not seem justified. Perhaps a few pennies might be saved by ordering cheaper advertising material that could be made locally. But the very cheapness of the material is detrimental. You might as well hire cheap salesmen and expect that they would get the same results as quality salesmen.

Those who fail to appreciate the excellence of the material and how much it means to them might well consider what would happen if the distribution of this material were suddenly stopped. There was a time when the exhibitor had to rely on his own resources for advertising material. Occasionally because of an emergency he is even now faced with this difficulty. Business has been built and it will continue to be increased through the effective use of advertising material by those who appreciate its excellence and its real necessity.

Consider separately every type of advertising material. Study it as you would a salesman. Ask questions about it. For instance:

- What can it do that no other advertising material can do?
- 2. To whom will it appeal?

3. What are the possible methods of distribution?

4. What are its tie-up possibilities?

- 5. What are the imprint possibilities?
- 6. What local conditions make the use of certain items particularly effective?

7. What mechanical skill is required to display each item properly?

- 8. For what type of photoplay is each item particularly effective?
- 9. How can the results it gets at the box office be calculated?
- 10. Where are the prospective patrons who must be reached and what can be used to reach them?

The Press Sheet

At one time the standard press sheet was prepared primarily to influence exhibitor purchase of photoplays. Its primary purpose was to impress the exhibitor. Now the photoplay is purchased by the exhibitor before he sees the press sheet. Therefore the press sheet is now prepared with but one purpose—to help the manager merchandise a particular production.

There are those who give the press sheet little attention perhaps because it comes to them without cost. But the capable manager uses every source of information available to increase his knowledge of what he is selling. Therefore he studies the press sheet as soon as it is available. The sooner he is familiar with a particular photoplay the more time he has to prepare an advertising campaign.

Managers have often said that if they were familiar with the photoplay further in advance of play date, their advertising would be more effective. From the time the title of a production is announced, the manager should start building up his knowledge of what the picture is and how it can be merchandized. The trade papers, for instance, carry advance information which the wideawake manager can store away. But this information is preliminary. It is the press sheet that carries the complete summary of what the manager needs. It is prepared by those who are close to production, who understand why a particular photoplay is being made, and what are its outstanding selling points. The press sheet should reach the manager sufficiently far in advance of play date to give him this information. If it does not, it remains for him to demand such service. Usually, however, the tardy arrival of press sheets is ignored only by those who do not appreciate their value.

Service.

A distinct service of the press sheet and one that is not fully realized, lies in the fact that it is a catalogue of the advertising materials which will be available for a production. The material should be studied as it is pictured in the press sheet. If first knowledge of advertising material is had only a day or two before play date, this material cannot be used effectively. Many a poster that is ideal for cut-out purposes is never used because its possibilities are not realized in time. Yet the poster was illustrated in the press sheet. Had the manager studied the press sheet in advance he would not have lost the chance for more sales with advertising material which he did not use because he learned about it too late. Tie-up possibilities for other material is understood by studying the catalogue carried in the press sheet. Novel displays can be planned in advance if the catalogue of the press sheet is used.

The press sheet is indispensable. It is advisable, therefore, to follow a definite plan in studying the press sheet as soon as it arrives. Mark the sections that are important so that they can be referred to readily. Study the catalogue of the material that will be supplied so that advance preparation can be made. The assistance given by the press sheet is supplemented by trade paper accounts of how others are merchandising a particular photoplay and by "follow-up" information sent by distributors. The Paramount Showman's Manual is a splendid example of this. It gives the manager not only suggestions for countless layouts with the standard mats and cuts, but also last minute ideas for many types of advertising.

Posters.

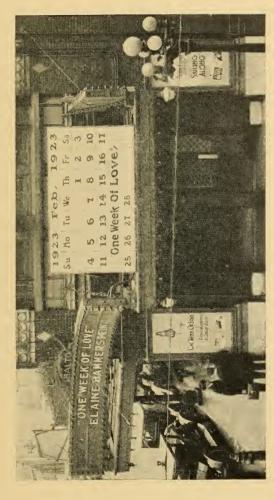
Outdoor advertising is justified by its general widespread use and rapid growth.

In 1902, the national total for outdoor advertising of all products was about two million dollars. To-day the national expenditure for outdoor advertising is over fifty million dollars. There is evidence on every side that outdoor advertising is getting results for other products—why is it so necessary for theatre advertising? What are its general advantages?

(1) The very size of the poster gives an impression of prestige and importance to the product advertised. (2) Few other mediums make the use of color possible. Color is the very life of outdoor advertising. The romance of entertainment and its emotional appeal make the use of color particularly advisable. (3) Illustration appeal rather than type appeal is the objective of the poster. Illustration appeal is particularly suited to the product of the motion picture theatre. (4) Repetition is essential in advertising and the distribution of some striking poster message around the community drives home its message by repetition. (5) The poster works 24 hours a day. It works 7 days a week. (6) It has less competition than advertising in other mediums. (7) It resembles the actual screen in size and layout. (8) It reaches patrons when they are on the streets and in the neighborhood of the theatre. (9) It can be used to cover a section of the community where theatre patrons reside without wasted coverage. The newspaper advertising, for instance, often brings a message to readers who do not live within the territory from which some theatres draw their patronage. Hence there is wasted coverage. But efficient use of the poster prevents any such wasted coverage. These are some of the facts that justify the manager's serious attention to the possibilities of outdoor advertising by the poster.

Location.

The effectiveness of the poster depends upon the location selected. Except for theatres that cater to the entire city, 60% of the posters should be within a two-mile radius of the theatre. Posters may be used in competitive territory but not in excess of reasonable expectation of the business that will be drawn by them. The location of a particular theatre and the residence



AN EARLY EXAMPLE OF THE ENLARGED CALENDAR

This is used for some titles which will fit, but is especially good for special weeks, the days either carrying the announcement, or being done in red instead of black to distinguish them from the rest. A somewhat similar effect is had from the enlarged telegram from a star or a magnified press criticism, but the calendar sheet seems to work the best.



of its prospective patrons determine how posters will be located. It is a particular problem and only a few general principles will be practical.

If you rely upon automobile trade from nearby towns, do not neglect to use posters along the roads or in the towns.

Be constantly on the lookout for good poster locations. Watch new buildings and excavations for "sniping" possibilities. Work along transportation lines leading to the theatre. Choose locations that will be visible from the more traveled side of the street. Posters facing schools, large factories, markets and transfer points are particularly effective. Athletic contests, parades and outdoor meetings offer possibilities for poster display which should not be overlooked.

Appearance.

The condition of the poster should give an impression of quality. Be sure the poster is securely fastened. Never leave posters displayed after a play date. If new paper is not available for coming attractions, use institutional copy or paste up the other announcements rather than keep a poster displayed for a production that is no longer at your theatre. Streamers carrying the name of the house should be pasted on neatly. Strips pasted over some portions of the poster to substitute new reading should be neatly arranged. The date strip is important. It is necessary information. Place it where it will be noticed without spoiling the general appearance of the poster. Use a color of date strip that harmonizes with the general color scheme of the poster. It is useless to develop an interest in a production without selling seats for it at your theatre. So be sure that your theatre and play date are prominently displayed. Remember that during summer months shady locations add to the seasonal appeal of the message. In strong sunlight during summer months, the poster is not as attractive as it might be in other lights.

Do not overlook the foreign element in your community. If the foreign element is large enough to justify the expense, let your poster carry some announcement in the foreign language.

Rotogravures.

The circulation of fan magazines and the interest in motion picture photographic material make this advertising item worth serious consideration. Because the roto offers space for local printing, merchant advertising can be secured to cover the cost of this effective item. Newspapers in small cities that have no rotogravure section welcome the motion picture roto as a substitute because they feel it has circulation-building influence. Part of the imprint space can be sold for merchant advertising to cover the cost of the rotos, which can then be supplied free to the newspapers. In such cases it can be used regularly in the Sunday editions. The rotogravure brings the shop window of the theatre right into the home. It does not look like advertising material and consequently usually receives a careful reading.

Imprint Possibilities.

The roto, miniature, herald, postal card and other advertising items carry space for the theatre manager to imprint not only theatre and play date, but also a message which will have local appeal, or advertising for local merchants or local organizations that co-operate for the distribution of the item. The imprint possibility is mentioned here because it is sometimes argued that material prepared for general national use lacks local appeal. Imprint space makes local appeal possible. Careful selection of copy for this space clinches the effectiveness of the item.

Novelties.

The novelties—coins, tape measures, wedding rings, pennants, cut-out dolls, buttons, feathers, caps, tops, booklets, miniature brooms, souvenir postcards, door-knob hangers, etc.—have a value far beyond their cost, since the novelty is shown to so many. If you circulate 1,000 heralds, you may reach 1,000 prospects. But if you give 50 children a novelty hat carrying a striking message, you may have them circulate your message to 5,000. The clever novelty is so different from the familiar advertising of other products that it is discussed and shown about.

Check-ups.

The efficiency of advertising material should be determined by some kind of a check-up. It is impossible to accurately gauge the returns of any advertising. However, some approximate estimate is possible.

It is only by constant experience and regular check-ups that you can determine whether you are using the best methods of distribution, and discover the value of the different materials. A little ingenuity will give you check-up methods. For example, a manager who doubted that the roto was carefully read distributed rotos which carried a single line, announcing that fan photographs would be available at the theatre for those who requested them. He argued that if the roto was read carefully enough to have this line noticed, then its efficiency was certain. To his surprise the supply of fan photos available for distribution was completely exhausted. A test like this will convince the merchants from whom you request the use of the imprint space for his advertising that the roto not only gets into the home, but is carefully read.

Similar tests can be applied to heralds and the miniatures. Do not use the test too often. Do not expect that people will report that they have seen the item unless you make it worthwhile. You can make it worth-while by offering free a cheap souvenir or some other ad sales item such as fan photographs.

You can discover how carefully your newspaper advertisement is read by including a line offering a souvenir or a fan photo or a miniature to those who present the advertisement at the box office, or offer a prize to those who note misspelled words in the advertisement. Window photographs can be checked by using a corner announcement card in the same way. A strip on your poster advertising announcing a souvenir for reporting at the box office will not only get the poster more carefully read but will help to determine circulation.

Trade-marks.

Advertising materials generally carry the producer-distributor trade-mark. Trade-marks have selling value. Millions of dollars have been spent to create an appreciation for certain photoplay trade-marks. Managers who have not booked photoplays of certain producers have wondered at the number of requests from patrons, not for a particular photoplay, but for a certain trade-mark for which national advertising has developed a desire. Consider Paramount's national advertising. For over ten years there has been a continuous campaign to establish in the minds of theatre-goers a desire for productions which carry the Paramount trade-mark. This advertising has made new patrons, because those not familiar with photoplays have had a curiosity developed by the quality of this advertising, and where they see a local theatre advertising the product for which their interest has been awakened, they patronize that theatre. It is not our opinion that every patron selects entertainment according to the trade-mark. But it must be admitted there are some who do. And if these can be won to your theatre by the display of the trade-mark, it is good business policy for you to display it. It is ridiculous to have the local printer blot out the producer-distributor trade-mark on advertising material with the excuse that this display builds a reputation for the trade-mark rather than for the theatre. Can you imagine the grocer refusing to display the trade-mark "Campbell's Soups" because this display would add to the prestige of the manufacturer even if it did make sales at his store?

Did you ever stop to realize how large is the national advertising appropriation of the leading producers? Paramount, for instance, in its expenditure for advertising in its national magazines for the year 1925, ranked higher than such well-known advertisers as Cadillac, Firestone, Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Goodrich, and Buick. It is the theatre manager who ultimately pays for this advertising and it remains for him to capitalize on his investment.

The farm magazines are now being used for motion picture advertising. Perhaps you depend on rural patronage. Do you know what farm magazines are read in your locality and what motion picture advertising is carried to the farm homes to help build patronage for your theatre?

If you are showing productions carrying any trade-mark that has been established by national advertising, make the fact known. It gives your theatre all the prestige and standing that has been developed locally by this national advertising which also creates a demand and lessens the sales resistance to be overcome. Your newspaper advertisement should always carry the well-known trade-marks. Perhaps there is some blank wall space in your lobby where a panel could be set. This panel could carry the full-page reproduction in color of the national advertising in the Saturday Evening Post and other magazines. You are paying for this wall space with your rent. Use it. Managers who cannot afford to buy enough advertising material to cover such wall spaces display the full color page national advertisement. They have the entertainment atmosphere, they are attractive, they sell, they make regular patrons.

Watch the issues of the national magazines that carry motion picture advertising and try to arrange your play dates so that you can tie up with the timely national advertising and get the full benefit of it. Newsboys and newsdealers can insert your herald near the pages that carry the national advertising of a photoplay which will be shown at your theatre and thus the national advertising becomes local.

Fan Magazines.

The theatre manager should read at least two fan magazines every month because he is expected to know those things about screen personalities and productions in which the fans are interested. Patrons expect the theatre manager to know all about the industry. If they ask him about the gossip carried by the fan magazines and find him utterly ignorant, they wonder why he knows so little about his business. The fan magazines reveal the attitude of your prospective customers. The reports or reviews on photoplays are helpful because they are really a shopping service to the readers. The fan magazine reviews are based entirely on the entertainment value of productions. Where they are favorable for a photoplay which you will show, they can be used in your campaign.

When reviews are unfavorable, you can be sure that sales resistance has been built up and your merchandising can take this into account. A list of local subscribers to the different fan magazines in your community is available, and this list could be used for direct mail advertising for certain types of productions, so that you can tie in with articles the fan magazines are carrying. The fan magazine has developed an interest and it is for you to capitalize on it. Incidentally, the full-page portraits that appear in the fan magazines can be used to good advantage in lobby panels. This applies particularly to smaller theatres where the budget does not permit the purchase of sufficient standard material to make the lobby attractive. Many theatres have attractive displays made of full page star photos from fan magazines.

Conclusion.

Because the cost of standard advertising materials is relatively small, it is false economy to risk the loss of possible patronage by a penny-wise and dollar-foolish attitude towards advertising materials. It is ridiculous to make substitute material and hope that it will equal the quality of the standard materials prepared by experts. The material is made for the theatre manager. Quantity purchase makes low cost possible. If you or a local artist can improve on the standard material, there is fame and fortune waiting in the field of commercial art. If you make substitute material just to justify your pride—it may be a costly indulgence.

Advertising material is improving. Do not let your opinion of it be determined by what was available five years ago. Progress is rapid. Study what is available to-day. If there is an occasional blunder and a piece of material is inaccurate, or carries a scene not actually shown in the photoplay, or lacks a real punch—remember this is occasional and not the regular practice.

Without advertising material you are working alone—and with empty hands. Programs will not sell themselves. Selling requires salesmen. Your advertising materials are just so many salesmen. Send them where you must have your program sold. Appreciate the high standard of the material that is available. Be familiar with each item. Know every one of its possible uses. You can use methods to check up on the returns. The check-up tells the story.

CHAPTER XIII

CUT-OUT DISPLAYS

OVELTY and variety in advertising displays depend very much upon the ingenuity of the manager.

Home-made displays which require but little mechanical ability to construct arouse more interest and make a more lasting impression than the mere regular showing of standard poster material. This is especially true of cut-out displays, which, although they are not new to the business, have not reached as general a use as their effectiveness warrants. Unfamiliarity with methods of constructing cut-out displays has prevented many from using them. Simple directions for the making of cut-out displays are given here so that they can be followed by the managers of smaller theatres where the advertising budget makes the use of every penny an important consideration.

Of course, in larger theatres, cut-out machines can be installed such as the International Cutawl, and display experts can work with materials which cannot be purchased at smaller theatres.

Materials.

Cut-outs, while they can be made from any decorative material, are generally made from lithographic paper, the standard posters, window cards, lobby cards, heralds, and also stills. They find their greatest usefulness in the fact that a cut-out lithograph may be effectively used where the unframed three or six sheets would be at least inartistic, and where a 24-sheet could not be accommodated in the available space.

Location.

They can be placed in the foyer, the lobby and on or under the marquee. They may be used for the curb display at distant points. They find ready admission to store windows where the straight lithograph would not even be considered by the store management. This is particularly true of a cut-out mounted in a shadow box against a backing of painting or drapery.

Bases.

Cut-out bases may be made from a variety of materials. but the bases generally used are common brown wrapping paper, building (sheathing) board, cardboard, double-faced corrugated board and wallboard. Wallboard, also known as compo board, comes in a variety of makes-for instance-Upson Board (a sulphite fiber-pulp preparation already sized and primed, can be painted upon even with water colors and easily cut)—Cornell Board—Plastergon, etc. It is well to avoid those boards which have a middle layer of tar paper. This makes it more enduring where it is used for its intended purpose as a substitute for plaster walls, but the tar will greatly interfere with the use of the board for cut-outs since it will gum the teeth of the saw and make constant cleaning necessary. As this board usually is higher in price than the straight compo board, the matter of cost also is an item of importance, particularly where much is used. Avoid also the cheaper boards which have uneven texture because they are made of chips and fibers which do not cut evenly, become brittle and break and take up too much paint.

Some wallboards are given a glossy surface which makes it difficult to paint over with water colors. It is possible to obtain wallboard with a flat surface that will take either oil or water colors, but in case an emergency requires the use of the gloss surface, the defect may be overcome by sizing the wallboard with a priming of glue, by mixing soft soap and glue with the colors, or, in extreme cases, by using both.

Wallboards come in a variety of sizes and thicknesses. The following thicknesses are generally available—1/8 inch, 1/4 inch and 3/8 inch. The local dealer can supply these thicknesses. Do not use the expensive 3/8 inch when other thicknesses will serve the same purpose. A letter to the manufacturer will get you the service you require if the local dealer tries to give the impression that only one thickness is available.

Expense is also saved by ordering the proper lengths. Factories supply lengths from six to sixteen feet.

Wrapping paper may be used where the cut-out is to be suspended in a place reasonably free from air currents and protected from the weather. This is good for the smaller size posters, but for larger sheets it is better to use the so-called "rosin" paper, which is to be had from any dealer in builders' materials. Even tarred paper may be used, but this generally requires some treatment before it can be worked. A good cheap material is the corrugated paper or "board," which comes in rolls of 100 feet or more and in various widths. It is reasonably cheap, and when properly braced it will stand up very well for a week or ten days. It may even be used for large outside work if protected with a coat of cheap varnish.

M. W. Larmour, of the National Theatre, Graham, Texas (who has suggested some of the ideas explained in this chapter), uses corrugated board for most of his work, and yet he has never bought a roll of the paper. Corrugated paper is widely used for shipping goods, and Mr. Larmour has an arrangement with the man who carts the discarded wrapping from the stores in the downtown district. All corrugated paper boxes are dumped into the theatre alley, and the driver receives an occasional pass for his trouble. From such a variety of boxes it is possible to obtain flat sheets in sizes up to four by six feet.

Bracing.

Corrugated board requires back bracing to give it stiffness, and plastering lath will be found the best cheap material for this purpose. It will suffice except where large structures are planned. Then roofing lath may be used as a backbone for your bracing. Roofing lath is also known as 1x2, though in reality it is not quite those measurements. The bracing can be done before the paper is mounted, using one-inch wire nails and clinching on the back. This method hides the nailheads when the paper is pasted down, but it has the disadvantage that sometimes the heads will tear through the soft material, necessitating fresh nailing.

The better plan is to first mount the paper and then brace the cut-out, painting over the nailheads with oil or water color if the cut-out is to be closely viewed. Such a procedure is not necessary with wallboard unless your design is larger than a single sheet, but even then it is well to brace arms and legs. The Upson Self-Clinching Fastener is a useful device. Its use makes it unnecessary to nail through the face of the board to the supporting framework. The board is clinched from behind and thus the face is not defaced.

Wallboard may not be salvaged from local sources, but if you use much of this material you may often effect a decided saving by ordering from a mail order house. The prices are generally much lower than you can obtain from the local dealer. On the other hand, there is sometimes a good-will element to be considered. The local dealer certainly will not be pleased if you send away for material he carries, and in a small town he may talk away more business than will offset the saving you effect. So then the best way will be to get the mail order prices and put the matter squarely up to the local dealer. He often will cut to come reasonably close to the catalogue figures.

Mounting.

Mounting the poster material is a matter requiring some skill. There seem to be two methods of procedure, each having its own advantages. The first is to glue or paste both the mount and the back of the lithograph. The second is to paste only the mount, using a thick coat, and applying the poster dry. This latter seems to be the better practice. Do not paste the back of the paper and then mount on dry board because a smooth effect cannot be secured.

The advantage of the double pasting is that pasting the back of the paper stretches it so that in drying it will stay taut. But when the poster is applied dry, if plenty of paste is used on the base and the poster applied rapidly, you probably will find it possible to get the lithograph down before it has a chance to stretch out of shape. Either a roller or brush is needed to get the paper down smoothly. Generally you will find the brush better than the roller, and a small stiff whisk broom from the ten cent store will work as well as the higher priced brushes made for paper hanging.

The double paste method requires two persons, one to hold the wet sheet and the other to press it into contact. If the lithograph is kept dry and applied to a wet base, it can generally be set by one person. Paste the section of the backing represented by your first sheet. Get the top in alignment and press this down. Then make a sweep of the brush or roller down the center straight to the bottom of the sheet and work it out to the edges in broad strokes. Work rapidly to prevent stretching and then go back and make sure that all air bubbles are worked out. If you do it properly there will be no bubbles or wrinkles in the finished job. Now paste the space for the second sheet and make a nice join along the edge of the new sheet and proceed as before. The less delay between sheets the better will be the results.

Nothing is better than a fairly thick flour paste, particularly one made with rye flour, but even glue and library paste or even mounting paper can be used.

When the cut-out is thoroughly dry, it may be painted with a cheap varnish or a solution of silicate of soda, commercially known as waterglass. This will give a gloss finish that will carry more nearly the suggestion of a painting, and will also serve as a protection against the weather.

In making small cut-outs on cardboard for window work, it may be found that the card has a tendency to curl, due to the shrinkage of the paper. This may be overcome by pasting a sheet of any kind of paper to the back of the card after the front has dried. Even wall board backings will curl because pasted paper has a strong pull. To overcome this, paste heavy paper on the back.

In any form of the work, be certain that the front of the poster is completely freed from paste or glue, removing any surplus with a damp cloth as soon as possible.

Cutting.

For cut-outs it is best not to cut the outline before pasting, though it is good practice to trim to a margin of about an inch. Make the final cut after the mount is thoroughly dry. To cut corrugated board a sharp knife will be found best, and the best knife for this purpose is that known as a "cloth" knife, such

as is used by manufacturing clothiers for cutting several thicknesses of cloth at once. This consists of a blade about ten inches long and half an inch wide, with a thickness of about one-eighth of an inch. The cutting edge is at an angle of about twenty degrees. The blade slips into a handle, into which it is held by two set screws. As the cutting end is worn away, the screws are loosened and the handle moved farther up the blade. New blades will be needed now and then, but the handle will last a lifetime. The cost of this knife is less than one dollar. The blade should be kept coarsely sharpened, and not with keen edge, by using a rough stone.

Wallboard can be rough-cut with an ordinary saw or a sharp knife and then recut to exact outline with a scroll or "coping" saw. One with a deep back capable of facing the blade four ways is to be preferred to a one-way set. To obtain a really fine finish to the edge, use about a number 0 sandpaper. For a final touch, the edge may be finished with color, light green, blue, brown or red, according to the predominant tones of the paper. This is not necessary save where the highest decorative effect is desired. The back should also be painted where it is apt to be seen. Kalsomine is better than oil for this purpose, and may be washed off after use, if desired.

For the finish, white shellac is often to be preferred to varnish. Where varnish is used, it should be transparent. A common yellow varnish will often kill the colors. Since most cheap varnish is decidedly yellow, it is generally better to use shellac or waterglass.

For shaping cut-outs you can use a home-made saw table. This is a large table to the underside of which is attached the head from an old sewing machine. These may be had from the junk shops or sewing machine agencies for almost nothing. A small motor on the floor is geared to the pulley wheel on the head. A small hole is cut in the table directly over the needle holder. From one end of the table a well braced arm extends to this hole and to this is attached a coil spring heavy enough to hold the saw blade tight and yet not so heavy as to impose unnecessary work on the motor. To steady the saw blade, which is the ordinary scroll saw type, a small brass plate is countersunk into the bed of the table. In this, a slot is cut,

slightly wider than the back of the blade, and of such a depth that the edges do not engage the saw teeth. No part of the metal must touch the teeth or the saw is immediately ruined. Where much cut-out work is to be done, this device will repay its small cost in a very short time.

Animated Displays.

Animated cut-outs are, naturally, much more valuable as attractors than a still display, and they can be achieved very simply. An old fan or a rewind motor is one essential. Both are geared to speed, but the speed can be cut down with an old bicycle wheel or even wooden discs of various diameters. These should be of half-inch board, truly centered and with a groove in the circumference. The larger the wheel, the slower the speed. By getting a number of wheels, you can combine them to obtain any desired number of revolutions per minute.

For an intermittent movement, a pin may be inserted in the outer rim of the wheel to operate a trip, or an oscillating fan can be used. The fan also may be used to make electrical contact, either at the ends of its point of travel or at various intermediate points. In the latter case a series of contacts is arranged so that a loose wire on the fan travels over these as it passes back and forth.

Another valuable aid is an old vacuum cleaner, which can be used to give movement to flags and streamers in shadow boxes, or even create miniature snowstorms in boxes where the front is masked in with mosquito netting or black wire fly screening.

Cutting off the arms, legs or heads of poster figures and painting in the gaps and mounting the members on pivots will give a variety of motions. Added effect may be given nodding heads by cutting out the eyes and backing the holes with free swinging eyeballs set to the back of the cut-out. A flasher socket may be used to light transparent eyes, and a cut-out may be given additional appeal by adding "real" properties, such as a pipe or cigar, real or artificial flowers, or even completely dressing a cut-out with actual clothing or crepe paper dresses.

The bicycle wheel may be turned to run horizontally to give a turntable on which you mount cut-outs of race horses, automobiles and similar objects. Two small idler pulleys will enable you to gear the wheel to the motor. Usually the best effect is gained by adding a backing with slots through which the racers disappear or reappear. In any event, the wheel should be weighted to give it steadiness of motion. A "mystery" effect is gained with the same wheel by mounting the magnets from an automobile to the rim of the wheel, and letting these carry along a light cut-out on a cardboard platform just above.

Missing sections of a cut-out can be added or lettering removed with oil or watercolor. The dry colors, mixed with water and glue, will suffice for indoor work. Oils should be used for exposed cut-outs. For a final touch use the coarse bronzes known as "metallic" or "flitters." Paint the desired surfaces with thick glue or a quickly drying varnish and sprinkle with the bronze when nearly dry. This is good for daylight display, and is even better at night, when the bronze catches and reflects the lights. If splotlighted in color, this is even more effective.

Lettering.

Not only figures and backgrounds from posters, but even the lettering can be used for cut-outs. The letters, spelling a title, are cut out and strung across the lobby. These may be well backed and individually hung from a wire, or they can be cut from paper and pasted to a frame covered with fine mosquito netting, or on a tennis net.

Background.

Cut-outs can be used in lobby panels, foyer panels and in small wall frames around the theatre. Many a still offers excellent cut-out possibilities for small frames. The dark photographic background can be cut away and the figure used against a color background of velour, linoleum design, wallpaper design, crepe paper or Japan paper. If the color background of a poster, window card or lobby card does not harmonize with the decorative features of the lobby, the background can be

cut away and the cut-out figure used against a background of one of the materials suggested above. The cut-out figure becomes even more attractive if it is raised from the background by pasting it on a double thickness of wall board.

Conclusion.

Many standard posters are ideal for cut-out displays. The press sheet illustrations of posters give the manager an idea of the material that will be available for each production. Those who wait for the arrival of the posters before making plans for cut-outs often lose a good opportunity because the posters arrive too late. But press sheet illustrations will permit you to plan in advance. Backings can be salvaged and used again and again. Consequently the cost of cut-out displays is not excessive. It is one of the many phases of theatre operation where ingenuity can secure striking effects at a minimum of cost.

CHAPTER XIV

SELLING WITHIN THE THEATRE

THE distinctive advantage of advertising to patrons within the theatre is that the appeal is made either to regular patrons, or to those who have already been sold on one program and presumably are ready to be resold for a future program.

Those within the theatre offer the least possible sales resistance. Consequently, advertising to them should get better results with less effort. However, possible results are limited. While the manager seeks to keep his existing clientele he should be constantly striving to develop new regular patrons. Except for the indirect influence of word-of-mouth comment from those who have seen advertising within the theatre, such advertising does not make new patrons.

Because advertising within the house is so effective, it should not be overlooked in any campaign. It keeps intact an established clientele while other advertising can be making new patrons.

The Screen.

The screen offers the most useful opportunities for within-the-theatre advertising. This does not mean that the screen should be used to exhibit advertising announcements of trades-people. Such advertising may bring a small revenue, but it becomes very tiresome. Patrons resent it. Where one theatre uses such slides and the competitive theatre does not, the latter has a considerable advantage in patronage building. But although patrons may resent slide advertising of tradespeople, they do not resent the judicious use of neat slides and trailers announcing coming attractions or calling attention to features of theatre service and operation.

Slides.

Money is often wasted and opportunities are lost because managers cannot make slides. For the most ordinary



A SUGGESTION FOR A NEAT STYLE OF WINDOW DRESS

It should be the aim not to overcrowd a window display, but to use fewer articles and give the entire attention to a single item. Here the focal point is the cutout, but the attention also passes to the draperies and the collection of still pictures in the front of the window. There should always be one distinctive figure or display.



announcements, film trailers instead of slides are often used. This means extra expense. Often the slide for a small announcement would be steadier and more effective than a trailer. Besides, there are emergencies when a slide must be used because there is not sufficient time to send copy to a trailer manufacturer. Therefore, the theatre should be equipped with the necessary material for making slides.

Scratch Slides.—Every house should keep in the projection room half a dozen scratch slides for emergency use. A scratch slide can be written on as rapidly as a message can be written on paper with a pencil. The scratch slide is merely a glass plate coated with some opaque substance which may be scratched through, to get a white letter on a dark ground. The glass is thinly coated with photographic "marl" or "opaque," with whiting or Bon Ami in powder form, care being taken not to get the coating too thick. If the coat is too thick it will cake and come off in flakes, and fine lines are impossible. These scratch slides should be kept handy in the projection room, with some sharp-pointed stylus, preferably a "scriber" which can be obtained at any hardware store. The message is scratched, a cover glass added, a bit of tape used to bind the two glasses and the message is ready for the screen.

Radio Mat Slide.—For a more careful preparation, where time permits, the Radio Mat slide is suggested. This consists of sheets of gelatin the size of the slide, backed front and back with carbon paper. There is a protecting cover. The entire pack is placed in the typewriter, the message written precisely as in the case of any typewriting, but using a firm touch, and the carbon marks are transferred to both front and back of the gelatin, making a neat and solid letter. A mat is provided to outline the shape. The mat and gelatin, with the carbon paper removed, is placed between two thin cover glasses.

For permanent use, the slide is bound on all four sides with a strip of gummed paper. For temporary use, it is sufficient to have the long side of the glass hinged with this binder, using just a bit of the binder on the other side, to hold it down.

Home-Made Slides.—Radio slides are sold so cheaply and are so convenient that it scarcely pays to "roll your own." But home-made substitute slides can be prepared with any sheet

gelatin, colored light mediums, or photographic film from which the emulsion has been cleaned. Cover glasses and binder strips may be obtained from any dealer in photographic supplies.

Old photographic negative which has been bleached can be used as a base for the pen-written slide. Any photographer can bleach useless negatives and these can be cut to exact size. They should be written in drawing ink with a crowquill pen and should be permitted to dry before being placed between the cover glasses.

A slide which looks as well as those professionally prepared, can be produced from black paper with a stencil cutter such as that used for the mailing list. These stencil cutters cost \$100 and upward, and are not in general use, but where they are installed, use them for slides. The black paper can be obtained from any photographer who does amateur developing. The paper used on photographic film cartridges will also suffice. Since this is thrown away, the photographer will give you a supply gratis or for a pass.

Novelty Slides.—There are several novelties that can be used to attract attention and avoid monotony when slides are shown. For example, you can prepare a slide in the usual manner, and then coat one side of the outer glass with opaque. Working with a small camel's-hair pencil, you can remove this outer coat, and cause the message to appear gradually, getting much more attention. Or you can spread the message over a set of five or even more slides. The first few are merely clever lines intended to get a laugh and hold interest. You should disguise the advertising as long as possible. To illustrate, here is the wording on a set of slides in a series:

- Slide 1. There are 974,638 old maids in the United States.
- Slide 2. There are 795,793 bachelors.
- Slide 3. There are 5,298,793 married couples of which—
- Slide 4. Only 1,751 are happily married, but-
- Slide 5. They would all be happy could they see "The Golden Wedding" which will be shown here on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.

Only one of these slides carries the advertising message, but the other four focus the interest on that one.

Trailers.

To promote your coming feature photoplays, a good trailer service should be subscribed to. Use slides for house announcements, but even in a small theatre, the trailer service for features will more than repay its small cost. Figures have been collected to show that trailer advertising at different theatres has been primarily responsible for the attendance of over 15 per cent of audiences. The cost of trailer service is so small that the expense is less than ½ per cent per person. This service is cheap, dependable, efficient. In calculating its efficiency consider not only those who actually see the trailer, but also those who are reached by word-of-mouth comment.

Preview.

One of the very best inside activities is the special showing or preview for an unusual photoplay. This should be held in advance of the opening, if possible a week or ten days in advance. To this preview are invited the Better Films Committee, educators, clergymen, physicians, city officials and others whose opinions carry weight in the community. These should be asked to write out their opinion or endorsement of the photoplay before leaving the house (cards being supplied for that purpose). The best of the these can be used in newspaper advertising. The remainder may be posted on bulletin boards in the lobby.

The preview can be used to stimulate word-of-mouth comment when a program is booked on such short notice that sufficient advertising is not possible. Invite the general public to a free morning preview.

When the theme of the photoplay will interest some special class or group, as the police, or firemen, or lawyers, or ministers, or automobile owners, etc., those presumed to be especially interested should be invited in addition to your general invitation list. For instance, at the preview for a photoplay of college life, your guests can be athletic teams with their

coach. They can later comment on the accuracy with which a football game or a track event was shown in the photoplay, and this might be carried on the local sporting page.

Midnight Matinee.

This is a special performance starting shortly after the last night showing of the previous program. Those already in the house may be permitted to remain on payment of an additional admission, and the doors should be opened to such others as may prefer to wait. It will speed matters to require those who remain over from the regular show to purchase special tickets in advance. This will obviate the making of change.

Where Sunday performances are banned, and it is desired to give a picture a good Monday start, the Sunday midnight matinee commencing a few minutes after midnight is suggested.

In some theatres a midnight matinee is given for every exceptional photoplay. The midnight matinee gives the stamp of super-excellence, and where good faith is kept, the mere fact that a midnight matinee is announced for a photoplay gives emphasis to its excellence.

In any event, the midnight matinee serves to obtain early verbal advertising as well as immediate revenues. Special performances should not be hurried or slighted. Make them events. Race the film, shorten the rest of the program, have inferior staff service, and you will gradually lose patronage for previews and midnight matinees.

During the summer months, the midnight matinee can be made an event two or three nights a week. This will catch automobilists and others who stay outdoors in the evening, and where daylight saving is in force it will aid in offsetting the losses caused by the fact that the first night show occurs before sundown.

At times, local events will keep people out until close to midnight. These crowds make audiences for your special midnight matinees. For example, in communities where dances must terminate at midnight, the manager can occasionally appeal to those attending the dance for attendance at midnight matinees.

Contests.

Contests of many known varieties help not only to sell tickets for coming attractions but build patronage after the contest is staged. They will bring returns only in proportion to the effort put into them. Run them off casually and without regard for effect, and they will only mildly interest. The manager acting as master of ceremonies can make the contest especially interesting. If he is not qualified, he should get someone else to act as master of ceremonies. There are always men in any community who are "the life of the party." Get one of these to run off your contests. Pay him if necessary. But get someone who can put real spirit into the affair if you expect good results.

The best contest is one which helps to sell a coming program. Build up your contest around some idea in the photoplay which will be shown the following week. For instance, the Pretty Baby contest is more effective before the showing of a photoplay like "That's My Baby" than after it, or concurrent with the showing. The contest can arouse interest in the theme of coming features and thus attendance is built.

Timeliness.—Let your contest be timely, but wait until the contest idea has really caught on. An old fiddlers contest that followed too closely after the discovery of Mellie Dunham was not as effective as it would have been when interest was more widely awakened. A Charleston contest staged before the Charleston craze really caught on—or after it had died out—was not timely.

Prizes.—For any contest, seek the co-operation of your local merchants in the matter of prizes. Either induce them to donate suitable prizes in return for advertising and newspaper stories, or else get them to give you them at cost. Vary your prizes so as to patronize as many merchants as possible. See them a couple of weeks in advance, and get each merchant to display the prize in his window, supplying him with photographs and other material for window display. In this way, you have added half a dozen window displays for your contest at no extra cost and little extra effort. Obviously,

almost every contest offers opportunities for interesting newspaper stories and if the contest is arranged under the auspices of one of the local newspapers, even more newspaper space is possible.

In the following suggestions will be found outlined the basic idea of contests which have proved successful. In time, some of these will become stale, but they are given here to suggest others of similar nature:

- 1. The Flapper Contest.—Local girls appear on the stage to contest for prize for the best-dressed flapper, the most demure flapper, the pertest flapper, the flapper most like a flapper star in a coming attraction, etc. The winner is determined by the applause of the audience. Have stage setting in the spirit of the coming attraction. Thus, besides entertaining those who are present you help build attendance for the coming attraction. Use the current equivalent for "flapper."
- 2. Orchestra Contest.—This can be used for either professional or amateur orchestras. There may be in your community two or more well-known dance orchestras. Let them appear, one each week, for a succession of weeks. Give each patron one vote, not to be cast until the week following the last engagement. This should not be run more than four or five weeks.

For amateur orchestras, it is better to run off the event in one week, allotting one day to each orchestra. Let the applause at each performance for each orchestra be timed, and then averaged as the basis for the award. Obviously, each orchestra will do its best to pack the house during its performances. They will also help in advertising. The award can be either a money prize or perhaps a week's engagement at the theatre for the winning orchestra. Local music stores will obviously tie-in with this contest.

3. Pretty Ankle Contest.—The stage curtain is raised about 18 inches and the audience or a group of judges determine the winner. The drop can be decorated in a way that calls attention to the coming attraction around which the contest is built. Shoe shops and hosiery stores will be glad to donate the prizes and co-operate in the advertising.

- 4. Bathing-Beauty Contest.—Be sure that parental consent is secured for entrants. Suits can be donated by local department stores, the management of beaches, sport-goods stores. etc. The contest has more appeal when beach novelties are emphasized, such as parasols, lounging robes, etc. If local conditions permit, entrants can represent different clubs, different neighborhoods, different stores, different beaches, etc. Where other organizations co-operate for such a contest, the opportunity for co-operative advertising is exceptional, because window displays, announcement cards, co-operative advertising in newspapers and other forms of program merchandising are possible. The applause of the audience or the decision of the judges can determine the winner. Stage this contest in advance of the bathing-beauty photoplay. Then you get double return—in patronage to see the contest, and word-of-mouth comment for the coming attraction.
- 5. One-Act Play Contest.—Where there are dramatic societies or college dramatic clubs in the community, the manager can arrange a contest so that each group appears in a one-act play built around some situation in a coming attraction. If three clubs are entered, the one-act play of each will be continued through a week. Sufficient time should be given for preparation. Attendance will be built from the followers of each club. The photoplay will have three weeks' advance advertising because of word-of-mouth comment.
- 6. Prologue Contest.—Dramatic schools and dramatic societies can enter a contest with prizes for the best prologue idea suggested for a coming attraction. When the idea is selected, the members of the club or society arrange the details so that their own members appear in the prologue. This prologue is used during the run of the production. Another phase of the same contest is to offer a prize for the best prologue idea submitted by any patron, with the understanding that it will be staged by the local club. Thus the appeal of the contest is broadened, and patrons are forced to study the coming attraction to understand the type of prologue required. Dramatic clubs, instead of offering competition, are used to build your theatre attendance. Besides, their good-will is developed.

7. School Contests.—The best form of school contest is that which arouses inter-school rivalry. Then members of different schools visit the theatre to show spirit and loyalty. Let each school elect one member of each class, and each school send a team. Judging by ballot or applause determines the most popular pupil in each class. The winners can come back the following week to compete for the title of most popular pupil.

In one high school, each of the four classes voted five members. These appeared on four successive Fridays. The fifth Friday the winners of the four previous classes appeared to compete for supremacy of the school.

If desired, each pupil may be required to sing or recite, but it is better to make the decision on personality, since otherwise the program is apt to run too long.

Each local school can send one representative, or if the community is small, one representative is allowed from each of the grade classes. The School contest can be for the best impersonation of a character in the coming production, for the best recitation of, for instance, "Gettysburg Address" on Lincoln's birthday, for the best solo dancer or the best tango dance, etc. Try to arrange the contest so that it is based on an idea or theme of a coming attraction to stimulate word-of-mouth comment.

- 8. Ukulele Contest.—This can be arranged either for schools or for open competition. Have each entrant play one selection announced in advance and one other of his own selection. The same idea may be used for other instruments, saxophone, banjo, violin, etc. If desired, and there is a large entry list, the competitors can be graded by age. Choose for the selection to be played, the music theme of a coming attraction so that your advertising material can be displayed in music stores and at the schools.
- 9. Popularity Contests.—This generally runs for a period determined by the value of the prizes. Prizes have ranged from a loving cup to an automobile, a trip to Hollywood, to New York or Chicago. The automobile prize contest may run as long as three months, if the interest is kept up. Where a cup and ticket prizes are announced, a week is long enough.

Each ten cents paid toward admission is good for one vote. Matinee tickets may carry one additional vote to encourage afternoon attendance. If it is possible, get a newspaper to share part of the expense, because the contest is conducted as under its auspices, the paper will contribute publicity. The paper prints one vote coupon on weekdays and two or more in the Sunday edition. The idea can be extended to engage the interest of local merchants, who issue votes to purchasers on the same basis as the theatre. Merchants should pay a certain sum for each vote turned in, to pay for their share of the benefit. With this combination, it is possible to cut the costs materially and offer much more valuable prizes. Besides, the theatre has the entire business community plugging for it. This contest can be arranged so well that for a month the theatre and its programs are "the talk of the town."

10. Baby Contest.—Arrangements can be made with some local photographer to take photographs of all babies within a prescribed age, whose names are submitted by parents to the theatre management. If the requests are too many, the entries can be weeded to 25 or 50. The photographer makes free one 8x10 negative and from this supplies the theatre with a slide to be thrown on the screen. An untoned proof is sent by the photographer to the mother, with the suggestion that she might care to place an order. Only one negative is made of each child unless the parent is willing to pay for additional poses. Photographers have reported that the response for orders varied from 25 per cent to 80 per cent. The photographer, besides securing effective advertising, makes a profit. The slides are shown at the theatre in advance of the production for which word-of-mouth advertising can be stimulated by such a contest. The slides are numbered, and patrons are given cards on which to cast their vote for the "prettiest babv."

Comedy details can be added to the showing of the slides to make the contest more entertaining. There can be slides of negro babies, crying babies, babies in comedy poses. They, of course, should be marked "not in competition" and should carry no number. If the contest is conducted under the auspices of a local newspaper, the newspaper can print coupons

which entitle the mother to one contest photograph of the baby. The photographer will then make small photographs for newspaper reproduction. Then the newspapers can set aside a page for the contest. Physicians have co-operated to examine babies at clinics without charge. Merchants will donate prizes in return for newspaper publicity and program mention. Besides, they will offer special discounts on purchases made by mothers of babies in the contest. Window tie-ups are thus secured. As a variety, "Resemblance Contests" where the prize is awarded to the baby who looks most like a pre-determined type are possible. For instance, a prize to the baby who looks most like a well-known star when he or she was a baby. It is evident that attendance will benefit by the efforts of parents to get votes for their baby. This contest is entertaining. Besides, it makes the friends and the family of each entrant in the contest a builder of theatre patronage during the contest because they bring "rooters" for their favorite.

- 11. Boy Scout-Girl Scout Contests.—Drill formations and other activities of the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts can be shown on the stage with a prize to the troop or the member or the club nearest perfection. Marquees can be decorated with troop colors. There can be street parades. When staged in advance of a photoplay with appropriate theme, this develops word-of-mouth comment.
- 12. Comedy Contests.—It is generally admitted that the contest with comedy appeal is better received than any other. Moreover, amateur performers are not as effective when the appeal is serious. Pie-eating contests, watermelon-eating contests, string-chewing contests, eating an apple hanging from a batten by a string, apple-bobbing (for Hallowe'en), and soda-drinking contests, in which the boy manipulates the glass with his teeth, are all interesting and particularly effective if each of the contestants is in costume. In advance of showing of child-star photoplays, these are doubly effective. The merchants of the community will supply the accessories and assist in the advertising. Of course, these comedy contests are not suggested for great de luxe theatres. The neighborhood theatre or the small-town theatres are more suited.

13. Impersonation Contests.—This can be a general contest in which the entrants are free to select any well-known star for their attempt at impersonation, or the impersonation can be limited to a particular star. The first application of the contest is particularly suitable during Greater Movie Season.

In selecting a star for the impersonation, it is well to have the star one that appears in the coming attraction, and the costume limited to that worn in the attraction. Local dance halls will co-operate for the arrangement of this contest. The winner or even all the contestants can appear in costume on a particular night, when the management of the dance hall conducts a costume ball. Your stage setting can be in the spirit of the coming attraction. A framed 24-sheet of the star impersonated can be your background.

14. Music Memory Contests.—Cards are furnished patrons with space where they can write in the name of the musical selection played, also the composer. The contest is particularly suited for music week. A number is displayed on the stage or shown on the screen during the playing of a selection by the organ or orchestra.

When the selections are appropriate for coming attractions, this contest is doubly effective. The co-operative advertising possibilities with music stores, etc., are evident. The organ as well as the orchestra can be used for this contest.

A variation of the same idea is to offer a prize to patrons suggesting the most appropriate music theme for a coming attraction.

- 15. Organ Contest.—An organ club similar to radio clubs with their request programs, offers possibilities for occasionally advertising coming attractions. Where the organ club exists, patrons send in requests for songs or ask questions, the answers to which are set to music and used with a music slide. Now and then questions can be prepared by the management, the answers to which will stimulate word-of-mouth advertising for a coming attraction.
- 16. Country Store.—That form of country store in which the distribution of prizes is determined by means of coupons, is distinctly against the lottery law in most states and should

be avoided. In some sections, it is held that a manager has a perfect right to give presents to his patrons so long as his generosity is not determined by chance. He simply comes on the stage, looks the audience over, and announces that he is going to "give the scooter to that nice little boy with a red necktie sitting in the third row." This robs the country store of its appeal, but it avoids confliction with the law.

In the original form, merchants donated the prizes. Their distribution was determined by lot. It made for a heavy increase in business on dull nights, but was difficult to discontinue, since business immediately fell off. The Country Store does not build permanent patronage.

- 17. Ragamuffin Contest.—This is usually started on the streets with the ragamuffins parading to the theatre. In some cases, the entrants are so amusing that managers have had them appear on the stage and there awarded the prize.
- 18. Dancing Academies.—The management of local dancing academies and dancing schools, especially those for children, welcome the opportunity of having their classes perform at the theatre because of the advertising. When not repeated too often, and where the dances are properly selected, the entertainment value and local interest in performers justifies these contests. The old-fashioned dances can be built into a prologue for an appropriate production, or used with the proper stage display to stimulate word-of-mouth advertising for a coming production.
- 19. Harmonica Contest.—Interest in harmonica playing is being stimulated through the medium of radio instruction and through the efforts of the M. Hohner Co., 114 E. 16th Street, New York City. The latter has supplied practical promotion plans for harmonica contests in motion picture theatres. There are available instruction booklets, window trim tie-up material, posters, and booklets on how to secure the co-operation of local schools for such contests. A list of local dealers in your community carrying a stock of harmonicas is available, and with their co-operation the details of the prizes awarded and of co-operative advertising can be worked out.
- 20. Take-a-Chance Program.—This is not suitable for a house newly opened, or a house whose reputation is not well

established in the community. Its success depends upon the reputation of the theatre. The program for a particular week or for a half week is advertised as the "Take-a-Chance Program."

The public is kept in complete ignorance of details of the secret. An appeal is made to instinctive curiosity. The public is approached with some such statement as "For 51 weeks of the year you rely on the reputation of the theatre for the entertainment offered, and you know what you are getting—now 'Take-a-Chance.'" The mystery appeal, the display of question marks where at other times patrons had definite information concerning the program, the omission in all advertising of the name of any unit of the program, the use of star's photographs wearing a mask, amusement-page stories which discussed the program in a general way without hinting at the nature of the entertainment—all these develop the necessary curiosity.

The "Take-a-Chance" idea is serviceable for programs that are sure-fire entertainment, and yet which lack any outstanding selling points that will bring patrons to the theatre. In other words, once patrons come, they are sure to be satisfied. The mystery and curiosity bring them rather than definite advertising. Evidently, if an inferior program is shown, more harm than good will result. Use the "follow-up" after the program changes, emphasizing this: "The theatre's reputation is so good that record attendance was secured even though the program was not known during "Take-a-Chance Week."

21. Chain Letters.—There is a postal law against the chain letter, but an adaptation of this can be used to advantage. A pass is offered to any patron who will bring to a matinee five letters written and addressed to as many friends, describing the advantages of the theatre. These letters are to be turned in unsealed, and a pass issued for each five. The addresses are copied and the letters sealed and stamped. If there is any duplication, the duplicates can be sent on the theory that reiteration will have value.

Another form can be used when business is at a very low ebb. Permit any patron to write to five friends, telling about the house, and adding that the letter will be good for one admission at any matinee other than Saturday or Sunday. Each recipient may, in turn, write five others. There should be a time limit put to this stunt, which should run not more than four weeks.

- 22. Mystery Figures.—For a number of plays there have been good results from circulating a mystery character through the audience. This person, who may merely be masked or completely costumed, whispers some phrase to the incoming or departing patrons, advertising the coming attraction.
- 23. Prologue Advertisement.—Like the above is the introduction on the stage of a character, who makes a two-minute talk. This was very successfully done for "Phantom of the Opera," when the stage was darkened and a scream heard. A red spot came on to disclose a person dressed as the Phantom, who told who he was, adding that he would be on view the following week. In one instance, the Phantom was built on a frame, with luminous paint on its mask face, and carried about the stage dangling from a wire on the end of a fishpole. The person carrying the pole was draped in black with a black gauze mask. Working against a black cyclorama he was not distinguishable.

In another form, the prologue is a dance or scene from the coming production, and serves both as entertainment and promotion. In several sections, there was an elaborate local production of the Hula in connection with the coming of "Aloma of the South Seas."

- 24. Costumed Ushers.—Costuming the ushers as pirates, cowboys, Indians and the like is better done the previous week than during the run. Used in advance, the costumed ushers sell tickets. Employed only as atmosphere, they are less profitable. Costumed ushers are best where the ushers are girls. There is less interest in dressed-up boys. Instead of costuming the entire usher staff, one usher in costume could distribute heralds of a coming attraction. A similarly costumed girl should be used to distribute heralds to departing patrons.
- 25. Donation Matinees.—Originally known as the "potato matinee," the donation matinee has many varieties. Originally admission to a morning matinee was given to any child bringing one large potato or two small ones. The potatoes were sent

to the Poor Farm to help provide the Thanksgiving dinner. Today, the potato matinee is still a regular feature with many houses and it has been found that a \$5 prize for the largest potato submitted materially increases the supply. Working on the same idea, donations of used toys or old clothes are the admission tickets for a pre-Christmas matinee. Flower matinees are good for Easter and Memorial Day. Provisions of all sorts are sometimes accepted instead of potatoes.

Distribution should be through the Salvation Army, the police or some welfare organization or sent direct to institutions, the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant and other organizations sharing equally. If the donation is made under the auspices of a local newspaper, stories in its pages are possible.

This is usually worked at a morning matinee with a special program; preferably on a Saturday morning. The donations should be left on view in the lobby until late in the evening.

26. Special Nights.—A certain performance is set aside for which attendance appeal is made to a particular group, or at which individuals or small groups are guests of the management.

In some communities, Family Night has become an institution. The entire family is admitted for a flat rate. The number of the "family" is not questioned. The man who comes in with a dozen children will be laughed out of the repetition of the offense. According to the appeal of a coming photoplay free admission can be offered to bachelors or to spinsters or to those over 60 or to those over 6 feet or to red-headed girls or to bobbed blonds, etc. In each case advertising possibilities are evident. Gold Star mothers can be the guests of the theatre for a special performance of a war drama.

A theatre party can be given for local war heroes. A newspaper can carry stories commemorating the local heroes and announcing their attendance at the theatre. The lobby can be decorated with war trophies and the community will attend the special performance as a tribute to the heroes.

Veterans such as G. A. R., American Legion, Spanish War Veterans, etc., can be the guests of the management at a

performance under the auspices of a local newspaper or a local club.

The so-called "Old-Timers' Night" is set aside for those who have lived in the community for twenty-five or fifty years. Their attendance is announced in newspaper stories which call attention to the fact that the coming photoplay is based on the spirit or of the period of the "old timers."

- 27. School and College Nights.—To arouse interest in a coming photoplay of college life, set aside one night for each of the local schools or colleges. The marquee can carry school or college colors. The orchestra or organ can play the school or college march. The cheer leaders can be present to give a demonstration. Showcases of trophies from the college or school trophy room can be displayed in the lobby. Newspaper sporting pages can carry all-star teams. Perhaps members of athletic teams can parade to the theatre in uniform and occupy a reserved section. Evidently each school or college will do its best to get a representative attendance on its night, and consequently school bulletin boards can be used for theatre announcements. High-lights in the coming photoplay can be the basis for athletic reminiscence articles.
- 28. Souvenirs.—Often business can be stimulated, particularly at matinees, by the presentation of some inexpensive souvenir, such as a postcard of the star or one of the standard sales novelties or some trinket from a specialty store. There are a number of houses specializing in the supplying of this material, which provide assortments as low as two or three dollars a thousand. Where you have only a limited supply, and cannot supply all, do not advertise that you will give souvenirs to the "first hundred" or whatever your limit. Say that you have only a hundred but will distribute them while they last.
- 29. Cut-Out Program Holder.—Where the theatre cannot afford the cost of a program boy, managers have built program holders. These are either compo board life-size figures designed according to the ushers' costume of the house, or life-sized cut-out figures taken from the posters of coming attractions. In each case the figure holds a tray on which the programs rest. By using cut-out figures of stars in coming attractions, patrons are reminded of coming attractions.

- 30. Time-Tables.—On the back of heralds or small cards carrying institutional copy for the theatre, managers have printed the time-tables of local bus, trolley and railroad service for the convenience of their patrons. In some cases they have indicated the starting hours of various units of the program with relation to the arrival of trains and busses in the vicinity of the theatre.
- 31. Telephone Calls.—To reach a selected list of patrons, managers telephone at a set time when special rates can be secured from the telephone company, announcing the attraction at the theatre, giving details concerning its features. As part of the campaign for an outstanding photoplay, an exchange board can be set up in the lobby, and telephone messages sent during the hours when a crowd will be gathered to hear the messages. If the wiring cost is too great, a dummy board can be used and word-of-mouth comment thus stimulated.
- 32. Revivals.—Managers who bring back outstanding productions for a "Revival Week" can distribute to their patrons a list of about two dozen outstanding productions, and ask the patrons to indicate their preference; or a prize may be offered to patrons who select from a given list the pictures which are actually chosen for showing during "Revival Week."

Fashion Shows.

Merchants generally realize that the fashion show is one of the most effective methods of introducing new styles. The larger stores may stage their own fashion shows, but usually co-operation with a local theatre is favored by merchants. The object of the merchant is to establish the reputation of his store so that local patrons will not go elsewhere—and, to introduce new styles.

The co-operating store will pay for newspaper advertising, window displays, store announcements, and perhaps a street parade. In all this advertising will be included other units of the theatre's program because it is to the advantage of the store to have as many as possible attending the theatre during the fashion show. Even special invitations may be sent to the store's regular customers asking that they attend the theatre during the fashion show. These instances of co-operative

advertising should be explained by the theatre's representative who attempts to arrange the fashion show.

Usually the merchant will supply professional models, or co-operate to select and train college girls or society girls. Evidently he is interested in having his costumes properly displayed, and therefore details of hair dressing, etc., will be handled by an expert from the store.

The stage setting for the fashion show depends of course upon the fashions to be exhibited. Even small theatres can drape the stage effectively for a display. In cases where decorative back-drops appropriate for the particular styles to be shown are available, these should be used. Incidentally, the display experts from the store will co-operate in arranging lighting, decoration and setting.

If there is a thread of story running through the fashion show it becomes more interesting than the mere parade of models—for instance, "The Seven Ages of Fashion," "Fashions of To-day and Fifty Years Ago," "The Arrival of the Steamer from Paris" with models coming down the gang plank, etc.

Without any danger of the novelty of the fashion show wearing off, even as many as nine possibilities could be used, as follows:

- 1. Spring Fashion Show.
- 2. Summer Apparel Show.
- 3. Beach Costume Show.
- 4. Automobile Apparel Show.
- 5. Wedding Costume Show.
- 6. Fur Show.
- 7. Lounging Robe Fashion Show.
- 8. Millinery Display Show.
- 9. Children's Fashion Show.

The lingerie fashion show, for women patrons only, has evident disadvantages. Moreover, if admission is not restricted to women for this style show it is likely that possible advantages of added receipts during the week will more than be outbalanced by disadvantages in the way of lost patronage dur-

ing subsequent weeks, if there is offense caused by poor taste and questionable appeal.

Conclusion.

The really distinctive advantage of within-the-theatre advertising is that many activities not only build attendance at the time because of the entertainment appeal, but also stimulate word-of-mouth comment for coming attractions.

Evidently some activities suggested are not appropriate for de luxe metropolitan city theatres. However, in other theatres, good results can be attributed to local interest and the friendly personal contact that exists. Managers whose budgets will not permit the engaging of professional performers can get variety by novel contests and interesting activities in which the patrons may play a part. Incidentally, people at a theatre like to feel that they have a part in the entertainment. The smaller the barrier that exists between the performers and the audience, the better, except of course in the metropolitan theatres. Regular attendance at the theatre has developed a certain camaraderie, and self-expression should be stimulated. Striking proof of this is the way audiences, even at the so-called dignified theatres, join in the singing with the organ slides.

But the main purpose of the activities discussed is to sell coming programs. The regular patrons can be kept, and occasional patrons can be made regular patrons, by using one visit at a theatre to encourage future visits.

CHAPTER XV

USING THE MAILS

Mailling direct to the your prospect has the advantage of carrying your message directly up to the front door and ringing the bell. Whether there will be any response to your ring depends upon how convincing your message is. Your announcement may be read or it may be thrown aside unopened. This suggests the desirability of framing your appeal so that it will either not require opening, or resemble a regular letter so closely that it will not be considered a circular. In other words, unless your message can go out under sealed letter rates, looking like a letter, it is better to use some form of card rather than to enclose your announcement in a cheap envelope under third-class rates.

This does not apply to your house program sent to a mailing list where patrons have requested such mailing. Here you can use the addressed manilla wrapper, if you desire, though most house programs are printed with the post office permit and address directly upon the face or back of the sheet.

Lot Mailing.

The Post Office Department provides special facilities for mailing identical advertisements in lots of one hundred or more. The local postmaster will give you a permit and assign you a number. He will also supply you with the correct form. This is to be imprinted on all matter thus mailed, the form specifying the amount paid. It is well to make certain just what the weight will be, so that your item will not exceed the minimum. This is imprinted on the surface where the stamp should be placed. On programs or similar matter the imprint may be placed in proximity to the address. You can print the same time you print the advertisements, or you can have rubber stamps made. It is convenient to have a rubber stamp for emergency use and for handling ready printed matter.

For house organs, including rotos, the general practice is to print the permit on the upper right hand corner of the first page or at some place on the back where a space has been left for the address. On other matter, the permit may be placed where it is most convenient after the matter is folded to go through the mails. Even in the case of heralds, it is no longer the custom to use an envelope. The address forms a part of the sheet and the folded herald is clipped with a paper clip or, better still, with a bit of gummed tape or one of the red seals primarily intended for use on legal documents.

Mailing List.

Mailing announcements necessarily requires some form of mailing list. Generally a theatre has at least two or more lists. Two lists are sufficient for a small theatre, but a large house will find it profitable to make a series of special classifications. The main list comprises all of the names at your command. This is used when everyone is to be circularized. The first special list should be taken from this, and consists of the names of the better class of prospects. This is used for the mailing of special form letters or special appeals. It is useful in getting special attention for subjects not likely to sell freely to the general public, and for which you wish to make a special drive. This list should include professional people, social leaders, officers and members of leading clubs, city officials, the clergy, etc.

Many theatres maintain special lists for limited appeals with classifications, such as physicians, lawyers, teachers, clergymen, etc. Other special lists include automobile owners, suburban addresses, suburbanites not owners of cars, R. F. D. routes, societies, and various other classifications that will be suggested by the groupings in your town.

Sources.

To obtain these lists requires work, but a really good mailing list in the hands of an alert manager will be worth many times its cost. The easiest source of addresses is your program. If you issue a program regularly, run a card to the effect that any person desiring to receive the issue regularly

may leave name and address with any usher or at the box office. The same announcement may be repeated on the screen by means of a slide.

Another good source of authentic addresses is known as the "ten names" stunt. Children are given slips with spaces for ten names with the addresses and telephone numbers. It is general practice to make these slips carry some special announcement, such as:

"I certify that.....has told me that the Gem Theatre is giving daily bargain matinees except Saturday and Sunday," then space is left for the signature.

The wording may be changed to advertise some particular program. In either case the message serves to camouflage the fact that names and addresses are sought. Any child turning in a list of ten names receives a matinee ticket. There probably will be some duplication of names, but this method gives the foundation of a practical list.

Another practice is to provide the children with more than one slip and to give a small prize to the child turning in the largest list. In such a case you change the wording at the top to read that the signer casts one vote for "Tommy Jones" or the child whose name is at the head of the list used. In one contest 1,700 names were turned in with only about thirty per cent of duplication. In other words, more than one thousand live names were obtained at the cost of the prize—a pair of roller skates.

The most reliable source of names is the local telephone book, which is quite accurate when first issued. There are other sources, such as the blue book, municipal records, permit records, addressing companies, factory employee records, etc. The names of automobilists may be obtained from the office of the Secretary of State or whatever official issues automobile licenses. In most cities the registration lists of voters is available to the public. The tax lists also are open. Tradesmen will supply names. Automobile dealers will give the names of new car owners. There are various semi-public lists. The secretaries of clubs and orders may be persuaded to give a list, though some organizations have a by-law prohibiting the giving out of names of members.

Check-up.

It is a good thing to check up on these names as soon as received. The best way to do this is to send out a government postcard printed on the back with:

"Will you help me to select the pictures you like? Please check your preference below and mail, or hand in at the box office. If turned in at the box office this card is good for one free admission at thetheatre."

The headings generally used are: Society Drama, Melodrama, Western Drama, Mystery Stories, Costume Plays, Historical Photoplays, Comedy, Farce, and Slapstick.

It is also useful to ask the recipient to name the three male and female stars preferred.

These returns are not always correct as far as entertainment preference is concerned. You will find that many persons will check historical plays who will not come when you have them. The reason for such expression of preference is evident. People want to appear intellectual.

These lists not only check up the name and address, but they can be used for the formation of special lists. The stars more frequently played by you are given letters. These letters are marked on the mailing list. When you have a play in which these stars appear, you send out special cards. Suppose that "Reginald Montague" has been assigned the letter G. When you have Montague on the program you may send a herald to all names in your mailing list followed by a G.

A mailing list is useful only where it is accurate, and your effort should be to keep it as free from error as possible. Every mailing piece can be made a check on the accuracy of your list through the use of the return postage guarantee, the proper copy for which your post office will give you. Without this guarantee, second and third class matter not delivered to the original address will be destroyed. With the return postage guarantee the first piece of mail found undeliverable will be returned to you as "not found" or "moved," and you can then correct your list. A letter can be sent out under full letter

postage, with your card in the corner. It should run somewhat to this effect:

"Advertising addressed to you has been returned by the post office as undeliverable. If you desire to receive our theatre publications will you please supply the correct address on the enclosed postcard? A postcard is enclosed with space for the correct address."

Where the addressing machine is used, the form should be slightly different. Here only the post card is needed. It should start off with: "Mail sent to this address has been returned as undeliverable. Will you please make the necessary correction?" Below you can make an imprint of the stencil, with a "New address" printed below for the correction. No matter which form you use, it is necessary to show both the old and new address on the return card for identification.

The first class letter will follow the removed patron where second and third class matter is merely turned back. Keep the stencil in a special box, until you either obtain a new address or mark it off as dead because no response has been received.

Care should be taken to check up from each issue of the local paper. The death column should be particularly watched. Do not send amusement mail to a house of death. Your list should also be corrected for removals, new arrivals, new families formed by marriage, and similar information to be found in the newspaper.

Addressing Machine.

Most managers find that the addressing machine more than pays for itself. The stencils themselves serve as a record and do away with bookkeeping. Where the cost of even a small addresser is prohibitive, use the 3x5 catalogue cards rather than a book. A book entry is not suitable for careful check-up, because after a short time erasures and cancellations will make a page useless. Cards can be maintained in absolute alphabetical order and the pieces addressed from these.

Special Lists.

It is often a good plan to maintain two lists, one for those in the vicinity of the theatre, and a second for the names of those more remote, the second list being circularized only for the larger productions.

Where special class lists are maintained, separate stencils and cards should be used, but the name should also appear on the main list. The special lists should be lettered or numbered, and these signs appear on the main card, so that when the address of "John Smith" is changed on the main card, this card indicates that changes should also be made on other lists, as indicated by the letter or number used.

Maintenance.

Proper maintaining of the theatre's mailing list can not be a haphazard matter. A house employee, preferably an usher, should be told how to maintain the list. Daily correction should be made, and a general overhauling given at regular periods. Even where the return postage check is used, many houses make a special check once or twice a year, sending out a special letter under first class rates. This may sound troublesome and somewhat complicated, but in reality once the list is begun, it is only a matter of a few moments each day. It pays to keep the list as nearly up-to-date as possible, since each undelivered mailer represents a loss of from two to five cents.

Good-Will Mailing Campaign.

This campaign brings a message from the theatre into the homes at a time when such a message would be most appreciated. The theatre sends a letter on the occasion of a marriage, wedding anniversary, the arrival of a new baby, the coming of a new citizen to the community, birthdays, Christmas holidays, school graduation, etc.

Information necessary for this mailing campaign is secured by program or screen announcement and from insurance companies, churches, clubs, the Bureau of Vital Statistics, marriage license bureau, newspaper notices, etc. The following letters are typical of those which can be prepared for such occasions:

marriage. We wish you continued happiness and prosperity. We trust that the celebration of your happy day will include a visit to the Theatre and for this we are sending passes."

- Holiday letter just before Holidays. (A letter is sent to all the names on the theatre mailing list suggesting a theatre party during the holidays and naming the attractions booked.) "Holiday time is a happy time with dear ones and friends. The Manager and the Staff of the ______ Theatre hope to have a part in adding pleasure to your holiday season. Why not arrange a theatre party for the family and for your visiting friends? Feature holiday attractions have been booked as follows ______ It will be a pleasure to arrange for your party if you will telephone the theatre in advance."

For the BIRTHDAY—"The Manager and Staff of the
______ Theatre wish you many happy returns of the
day and a new year of good health and prosperity.
It would be our pleasure to have a part in your birthday celebration. Accordingly we are enclosing
passes."

Not a printed form but a personal letter should be used for each of the above. It is evident that at a small cost much good will can be developed by such letters whose timely courtesy is much appreciated.

Conclusion.

Many items of standard advertising material available for theatre use can be best distributed by direct mailing. Usually the difficulty is that the theatre has no up-to-date mailing list. It is evident that a list can be prepared and maintained at relatively small cost and relatively little effort, considering its advantages and many possible uses.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LOBBY

THE lobby is the theatre's show window. It should not be considered as "just the entrance" to a theatre.

Like the show window of any other institution, the lobby has merchandising influence. This influence is important; it is valuable. An ideal location makes the lobby some theatres' strongest sales influence. There are relatively few theatres whose location is such that the sales influence of the lobby is negligible.

The Show Window.

Modern business has recognized universally the value of the show window. During the past decade, improvement in show-window design and display has been remarkable. Experts generally agree that show-window display is the most effective way of obtaining sales. They estimate that the perfect store window will bring an increase of 50 per cent in the business done by the average store. This power of the store window is reflected in its rental value. It is figured that, although the window occupies but 10 per cent of the store space, it costs 25 per cent of the store rental. There is a great difference in rental for stores on the same street with slightly different window display space. All this emphasizes the importance of the show window and carries a definite lesson for the theatre manager.

Circulation.

In determining the average store rental, the number of people regularly passing the store is considered. This circulation of passersby determines the store rental, just as newspaper circulation determines newspaper advertising rates. The theatre manager should realize that passerby circulation has determined theatre rental, as far as lobby space is concerned. Therefore he should view this rental expense, determined by

circulation, just as he views the cost of newspaper space, also determined by circulation. This means that he will give the same careful attention to getting returns on his lobby space as he gives to getting returns on newspaper advertising space.

There are some theatres whose location gives the lobby a larger circulation for an advertising message than does a local newspaper. Nevertheless, managers who give careful attention to the use of newspaper space will overlook many opportunities for merchandising with the lobby to an even larger circulation.

Functions.

Window display experts set down these three general functions of the show window:

- 1. Drawing attention to the store and reflecting its policies and character.
- 2. Selling the institution as well as its merchandise.
- 3. Supplementing other advertising.

The store window exhibits the product where its purchase calls for the least effort, and where the desire of possession, once developed, is not likely to be ignored. So powerful is this influence of the show window for immediate sales that some institutions in their other advertising call attention to their show window. They make it a practice to bring people to the store to look at the windows, feeling that the window display will be strong enough in itself to bring them from the window into the store.

The theatre cannot actually display in the lobby the merchandise that it sells as can the department stores and other institutions. The product of the theatre is intangible. It is not something that can be carried away as can other products. In fact, it is bad to "give away your show" in the lobby. If a miniature trailer in the lobby shows too much of the program, people get their entertainment in the lobby and will not buy tickets.

However, the lobby can be so inviting and its advertising message so convincing that it will bring people from the street into the theatre, just as the show window brings customers into the store. If any contest can be arranged which would require that people visit the theatre lobby to study the displays there, this would lead to ticket sales. The manager should consider the lobby as the theatre's show window. He can learn much by noticing the care given to the windows of other institutions to make them attractive, inviting, recognizable, and indicative of quality.

No Standardization.

Show windows of other institutions can be generally standardized. Shape, arrangement, display, and lighting for store windows can be brought down to some general principles: but the theatre lobby cannot be so easily standardized. Practically every theatre lobby presents an individual problem. No two lobbies are exactly alike in every detail. Even if any two lobbies are alike in construction, their problems vary because of difference in location, artistic background of the lobby, policy of the house, the side of the street where passerby traffic is heavier, local fire and building code regulations, etc. Because every lobby has a unique problem, the manager must determine the arrangement and lighting and decoration of the lobby very much as he goes about the arrangement of an advertising lay-out. The arrangement of the lobby is a problem in lay-out. There is just so much space to use, so much surrounding material to be considered, definite types of patrons to appeal to, and certain details to be emphasized and others to be toned down. The manager should spend time in front of his theatre seeing the lobby as it is seen by passersby, considering its possibilities and striving to strengthen its selling power. Just as the merchant studies the store window as a merchandising influence, so should the theatre manager study his lobby.

Built-in Displays.

There was a time not so long ago when the lobby was the theatre's only advertising medium. The early store shows did not use the newspaper, the billboard, and other forms of advertising. All emphasis was placed on the lobby. Muslinback posters covering almost the entire front were later followed by heavy built-in fronts; for instance, with a railroad photoplay, the front was built-in to resemble a railroad car

entrance; with the romance photoplay the lobby was built-in to resemble a castle.

The tendency to-day is to do away with such elaborate, spectacular fronts. The cluttered-up lobby has changed to the lobby of simplicity, neatness and quality. Decorative panels have replaced the heavy built-in effects. This change came not because the lobby as a sales agent does not justify the expenditure for elaborate display, but rather because the novelty of elaborate display had worn off. But in the attempt to achieve quiet and tasteful decoration, some managers have gone to the other extreme. Artistic hand-painted panels and "high-brow" designs are given preference. Many of these do not sell entertainment to the average person passing the theatre.

Window Shopping.

People window-shop in front of the theatre lobby just as they window shop at the show window of other institutions. They are not shopping for art. They are not shopping for beautiful decorative panels. They want to know what the particular theatre offers in the way of entertainment. If the lobby can give them flashes of high lights on the program in stills, lobby cards, etc., the more likely they are to visit that particular theatre than if some futuristic art work was the only clue to the program. There is such a thing as overdoing dignity and overdoing "high-brow" artistic effects in the lobby. The lobby should be neat, attractive and decorative, and at the same time the show window for entertainment, not the show window for art work.

"Come in NOW."

Other theatre advertising can only carry the message, "Go to the theatre." The advertising message of the lobby is, "COME IN." If other advertising is effective, it does create a desire to visit the theatre; but between the time of conviction and the actual purchase of tickets many things might happen. Perhaps the desire created by the advertising will not last long enough to prompt the actual buying of tickets. This is not usually possible with lobby advertising. If lobby advertising carries conviction, it makes its sale right then

and there, because there is no time for the conviction to change.

"Do It Now."

The lobby is primarily the point of immediate sale. Its whole appeal should carry the tone of "Do it now." It is not wise to use the outside lobby for advertising coming attractions. While you have your prospects right in front of the theatre, sell them that program which is now being shown. Do not lose this opportunity for immediate sale by emphasizing something else that cannot be purchased right then. Sell the coming programs inside the house.

Indirect Sales.—Although the main influence of the lobby is for immediate sales—attracting passersby to enter the theatre then and there—the lobby has also indirect influence. It can persuade some who because of other engagements find it impossible to enter the theatre at the time, to return later, because it sold the current program so effectively. Besides, the effective lobby has the influence of stimulating word-of-mouth comments by those to whom it has made strong appeal.

Sales, Not Crowds.

The purpose of the theatre lobby should never be simply to attract crowds. The crowded lobby may not be the sign of its effectiveness. Some managers have used forms of advertising in the lobby which attracted crowds, but sold relatively few tickets, because the attraction in the lobby satisfied the onlooker so completely that further entertainment was not desired.

The prolonged dance exhibitions in the lobby may attract a crowd, but if this "free entertainment" is given too generously, the crowd is satisfied and moves away. Some mechanical lobby displays have been so entertaining, that passersby crowded the lobby, and remained there long enough to satisfy the entertainment urge. The showing of trailers in the lobby can be carried to excess. If the trailer is too long and carries so many scenes from the production that the entire story is practically given away, the lobby will be crowded by those who will enjoy the "free entertainment." The object of the

lobby is to sell tickets, and not simply to attract a crowd. Let mechanical displays, trailers, lobby music, and lobby dances whet the appetite and arouse curiosity so that tickets will be purchased.

In this the theatre lobby differs from the show window. The show window cannot display too much of the product on sale. But the theatre is selling something that is intangible. The sale depends upon awakening desire and curiosity only to a point where tickets are bought—and not beyond that point.

The Institution.

The theatre lobby, like any other show window, sells the institution. The theatre as an institution of entertainment should have an entertainment appeal in the lobby. should be nothing sombre, nothing dingy, nothing gloomy and nothing that savors of drudgery or daily work. The lobby should be the brightest spot on the street, because brightness and entertainment are so closely associated. In fact, if local merchants will keep their show windows lighted, the theatre street becomes a "path of light" which helps attract those seeking "entertainment." Every detail of the lobby should breathe the spirit of entertainment, carry a message that speaks entertainment. Appealing decoration, novelty, general tidiness, sparkling brass and bright lights, the alertness of the service personnel—all combine to appeal to the mood of those who seek entertainment. Because people seek escape from daily drudgery, entertainment appeal is not conveyed by such displays as brooms, washing machines, household implements. which have been displayed in lobbies because the theme of the featured picture was based on some phase of life where these reminders of toil played a part.

Make your appeal glamorous.

In selecting material for lobby display, remember that people are not attracted by such gruesome details as the electric chair, the hangman's noose, a dark and dingy cabin, etc.

Some lobbies are generally so attractive in their entertainment appeal that the very thought of entertainment brings to mind a particular theatre lobby. Other lobbies are so lacking in entertainment appeal that many members of the community

have never entered the theatre, because their judgment of the theatre was determined by the appearance of the lobby. Independently of any particular program, the lobby can create a favorable or unfavorable impression of the theatre as an institution of entertainment. These things create an unfavorable impression: cluttered-up entrances, dirty frames, dusty glass, slovenly attendants, careless lettering, lights out, the need of paint, the need of polish, carelessly hung posters, inaccurate announcements, a bewildering display of titles with no indication of the current program.

Such carelessness creates the impression that there is the same carelessness in selecting programs, in cueing pictures, in seating comfort, in ventilation, and in other details of operation. The lobby can create an impression of quality. This impression is accepted as characteristic of the entire operation.

Change.

Because the theatre, exclusively an institution of entertainment, suggests novelty, diversion, variety and change, the lobby should never become monotonous. The lobby with the same familiar panel backings, the same familiar color effects, the same array of stills, the same general type of display week after week, becomes montonous.

Remember that the same people are passing your theatre day after day. If they become accustomed to your lobby, it is not likely that they will give it a glance as they pass. The show window that is not changed regularly ceases to attract attention. Your object is to attract the attention of as many passersby as is possible. Once the impression is created that there is always something new, some unexpected novelty, some added decorative touch, the more chance there is of attracting attention.

Besides, a change in the lobby means there is a change in the program, and the more pronounced you make the lobby change, the more attention will be attracted to the change in the program. The lobby can give the impression by repeated changes that there is always something new, something different, within the theatre. The ideal lobby would be one that any passerby could not help but notice.

Check-up.

Have you ever carefully clocked your lobby to determine how many of those who pass are drawn to the displays? What percentage of those who actually notice the displays buy tickets because the display has made sales? In other words, what percentage of your receipts can be directly attributed to your lobby?

The manager who is convinced that the lobby is not "just the entrance to the theatre," but the show window that can sell seats, should regularly check up on the lobby's sales influence. If passersby do not give your lobby so much as a glance, there is something wrong. The effective lobby can halt the passerby, bring him over to the displays, and actually sell tickets. But the monotonous lobby will not even get attention.

Strive for changes in color schemes, in panel backgrounds, in style of lettering, in the position of displays, even in the color of curtains for the box office. Seasonable changes, special decorations for holidays, the colors of local schools and colleges when athletic contests have awakened general interest, the emblem of an organization that is holding a convention in your city—all these offer opportunities for avoiding monotony.

Immediate Sales.

It cannot be repeated too often or too loudly that the lobby is the point of immediate sales. Immediate sales are made for the program now showing. How many managers use their lobby space to advertise the program that is coming rather than the program now showing? How many managers give a small percentage of their space to the current program, and devote the major part of it to announce coming attractions?

The passerby is right at the point where you can sell tickets for the program now showing. You have only a limited period of time in which to sell as many tickets as possible for that particular program.

Why neglect opportunities for selling the program now showing when the prospect is right at your theatre?

Announcements of coming attractions can be displayed beyond the box office, and in the foyer, where they will be noticed by those leaving the theatre. Those leaving the theatre have already been sold on the current program. You can sell them on the coming program. But people passing in front of your theatre are potential customers for what you have to sell right then and there. Appeal to them as strongly as you can for the current program; sell future programs through other advertising mediums that cannot make immediate sales.

The Program.

The lobby should sell exclusively the current program. This includes every unit of the program. Why sell only the feature? The news reel, the comedy, stage numbers, the organ, the orchestra—all have sales value. Many issues of the news reel have shots of current events of particular local interest. These can sell tickets. The mere announcement, "News Reel To-day," does not sell. Practically every theatre shows a news reel. Be distinctive. Select a strong selling point for your current news reel and use it in your lobby announcement. Managers who have used a special lobby panel for the news reel have found that information concerning the units of the current issue of the news reel has sold tickets.

An almost useless lobby announcement is "Also a Comedy." Your patrons know that a comedy is generally on the program. Why not sell the comedy by its title, or with a slogan, or with a design? Some passersby who are not interested in the current feature, might have their interest awakened by the advertising of the current comedy.

Managers who announce the complete program in their lobby are following the familiar rule, "Show them how much they receive for their money." This is wise. The restaurant that offers a table d'hote dinner advertises the complete menu. The program of the theatre is somewhat like the menu of a table d'hote dinner. The restaurant does not advertise only one or two features of the table d'hote dinner. The entire menu is displayed because it creates the impression, "very much for your money." It is common to see all lobby space

given over to announcements of an ordinary feature, with no mention made of other units of the program. Much of the space could be used to better advantage.

Date Cards.—Lobby announcements should carry a card reading "Now Showing." This is a service for patrons. So many theatres display coming attractions in the lobby that people are often uncertain as to the current program. Announcements in the foyer can carry a card reading "Coming . . ." with play date. By an exchange of date cards the same display can be used in the foyer and later in the lobby.

Schedule.—A time schedule for lobby display, indicating the starting hours of every unit of the program, is a convenience which patrons appreciate. Some managers list on each display of the different units, the different starting hours of that particular unit. Theatres that appeal particularly to drop-in trade will benefit considerably by this service. Uncertainty of the starting time of a particular unit in which the customer might be interested has often prevented the sale of a ticket.

Position.—Have lobby panels placed for easy reading. If they are too high above the reader's eye, or if parts of the panel can be read only if the passerby is near the curb, you will lose many readers. Twenty per cent of 100 lobby panels studied were placed too high for easy reading; the focal point of the panel, and often the striking display element, were so far above the eye-line of the passersby that it did not attract as many as it would if placed lower.

Seasonable Display.

The lobby decoration should be seasonable in its appeal. During the summer months especially, a seasonable lobby can attract many from the hot and dusty street. It does not suffice to display the exaggerated statement, "20 Degrees Cooler Inside." The suggestion of coolness in lobby decoration depends very much upon the use of color. The question of color is more fully treated in Chapter XXX.

Warm colors—yellow, red, orange, orange-red, etc.—should be avoided in lamps, drapes, panel backgrounds, cur-

tains, frames, etc. The cool colors should predominateblue-green, blue-violet, and green. Green is restful to the eyes. soothes the nerves and affords relief from the glare and the heat of summer. White paint under the marquee suggests coolness. Hidden electric fans remind the passerby that within the theatre there is an escape from the heat of the street. Attractive lattice work can replace heavy doors. Greens, flowers and ferns can be tastefully hung. Heavy, cumbersome displays which choke the entrance, giving a stifling effect, should be removed. Light, attractive uniforms for the theatre staff and a general alertness on their part will help to attract. Keep the lobby clean, neat and tidy during the summer months, because this adds to seasonable appeal. Flowing streamers blown by fans help to create the impression of coolness, so do snow and ice designs for panel backgrounds. In general, the theatre lobby, by its seasonable appeal during the summer months. can make the theatre recognized as a "summer resort."

During the fall and winter months it is comparatively easy to make the lobby seasonable.

With the coming of spring, people seek the outdoors. The lobby that is stuffy and dusty cannot meet the competition of outdoors. Spring cleaning is in order. The color schemes, the drapes, lamps and the displays which were warm and intense during the winter months should be replaced. Light green should predominate in the decorative effects of the lobby. Flowers and greens can be secured for display. Your theatre should be the first to appeal to the spring mood of passersby. When store windows around a theatre are rearranged with spring-time effects, a very bad impression is created by the theatre that keeps its lobby just as it was during the winter months. The very fact that the lobby has been completely changed for the spring months makes it more attractive.

Timeliness.

Besides seasonable appeal, the lobby can have an appeal that is based on timeliness.

Holidays.—Holidays, local celebrations, events of local interest give many opportunities for timeliness in lobby display. The display during Thanksgiving week should feature

turkeys, pumpkins, autumn leaves, chrysanthemums, corn shocks, Pilgrim heads, etc. During Christmas season, the display can feature holly, Christmas trees, Santa Claus, wreaths, reindeer, Christmas candles, bells, poinsettia, stars, etc. At Easter time the display can feature Easter lilies, Easter eggs, chicks, rabbits, etc. At Hallowe'en the display can feature jack-o'-lanterns, witches, pumpkins, chrysanthemums, goldenrod, corn, etc.

The Flag and patriotic symbols can be featured in the displays for Independence Day, Memorial Day, Washington's Birthday, Lincoln's Birthday, Navy Day, Patriots' Day, Armistice Day, Columbus Day, Election Day, etc. For Mother's Day the display can feature chrysanthemums, the proclamation of the President and Governor establishing Mother's Day, a tribute to the Gold Star Mothers, etc. Other holidays which offer opportunity for distinctive lobby display in the spirit of the occasion are St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Arbor Day, Music Week, Labor Day, Apple Week, and Old Home Week.

Local Events.—Many local events give the opportunity for timely displays. When there is an important athletic contest in the city, decorate the marquee with the colors and pennants of the rival schools or colleges. When there is a convention in session, the colors of the organization can be displayed in the lobby. The theatre anniversary gives the manager a splendid opportunity to make his lobby distinctive during the period of the celebration. The opening of a new store, or the dedication of a new monument, or the return of a local favorite—all these give the manager the opportunity of making his lobby timely in appeal and therefore more attractive. This not only helps the immediate sale of tickets because it attracts attention, but develops an appreciation for the progressiveness and the up-to-date spirit of the management.

Bare Space.

There is seldom any reason why there should be bare, ugly space in the lobby. Lobby space is valuable. Bare space can be covered with attractive panels at a very small cost. Managers whose advertising budget is so limited that standard

advertising material cannot be purchased regularly for such panels, can devise home-made displays.

Magazine covers and pages of the "fan" magazines can be cut out and pasted on decorative backgrounds. The full-page advertisements of producers carried in national magazines will make attractive displays for the lobby. Even star photographs can be displayed, and correct the bad impression produced by bare, ugly spots in the lobby. Just as merchants use valuable window space for display, so should the manager use valuable lobby space.

The quality of posters now available at the exchanges is so exceptionally good that one wonders why this material is not used more generously at theatres, where there are bare spaces that should be covered.

Every foot of lobby space is valuable. Consider to whom you can bring your lobby message, and then see if you are wasting valuable lobby space.

The Floor.—Even the floor and sidewalk of the lobby have an advertising possibility. Instead of plain rubber mats, mats with the theatre's trade-mark, or theatre name, can be used. Pasted lithographs and cut-outs under glass in the lobby floor. back-lighted by a lamp, make an attractive display. The painted announcement on linoleum mats is used. Long strips of plain tiled flooring can be broken with the insertion of colored tile spelling out the theatre's slogan. At the exit doors a step cut out and covered with glass, can show an inserted announcement of coming attractions. Thus, what otherwise would be only a dark step becomes an attractive and novel advertisement which will be noticed by all who use the exit. One manager placed a strip of red carpet from the curb to the box office and stationed a darky to keep it clean of footmarks, using the darky's uniform to carry an announcement of the current attraction.

Panels.

Lobby panel frames can be made very much more attractive by frequently changing the background, using different styles of design. Why should the same panel background appear without change week in and week out, when at a very

small cost the manager can have a variety of backgrounds. and change these weekly? Very attractive backgrounds can be made with wall paper, oilcloth, and Japan paper. The catalogue of any company supplying these materials will suggest many patterns for decorative backgrounds. Even the borders of the frames can be changed now and then by using flowers, birch bark, leaves, strips of colored metal cloth, etc. No matter how attractive and ornamental a frame may be, it ceases to win attention after people have become accustomed to it. Frames of plain pine rather than metal or gilt make it possible to give a fresh and novel appearance by regularly using home-made coverings. Cut-out silhouette designs and magazine covers can be used for panel backgrounds. For instance, when a national magazine carried a contest for "the funniest face in America" a manager collected faces, cut these out and pasted them against a panel background which was used for comedy announcements.

Animated Displays.

Movement, it is agreed, makes any display doubly effective. The chaser border and blinking light signs are proof of this. Moving displays in the lobby are most effective. With cut-out figures, different effects are possible by using flasher attachments such as winking eyes, waving hands, etc. Consult Chapter XIII. A color wheel with gelatin in the spaces, spotlighted from behind and revolved by the shaft of a motor, makes a startling display.

A novel and useful piece of equipment for animated displays is a vacuum cleaner. To get a waving flag effect, fasten the flag to a piece of pipe with an opening at the top and splice the lower end to the exhaust of the vacuum cleaner. If the latter is concealed by an ornamental base, the flag becomes a curiosity and an attention winner.

Fire effects can be produced with an electric fan behind some light gauze and an electric light. Tear the chiffon into strips and add some transparent splashes of yellow and red; light it from behind with two or three lamps, and blow the ribbon out with a fan, and the effect is striking.

Currents of air from a fan in a gauze-enclosed shadow box

with a heavy landscape background and cut paper gives a snow effect. You can use very small celluloid balls or other light white material.

Toy stores will supply miniature trains and other material for lobby display in return for a credit card which is displayed in the lobby. A miniature automobile race is possible with toy cars fastened on a belt that moves at a rate to suggest racing automobiles. A background for this display can be a poster cut-out. Miniature horses and boats can be used in the same way. Miniature sea scenes can be made in a tin tank or with tarpaulin spread over wooden frames and permitted to sag in the center. Use a little blueing in the water.

With animated effects remember that a moving object under dim light seems to move faster, while a moving object under intense light seems to move more slowly.

Sound Effects.

Sound effects in the lobby can often attract even more attention. The use of the Magnavox with concealed wire for carrying orchestra and organ music to the street or to carry the laughter of the audience to the street is in common practice.

Home-made sound devices are easily constructed. A string run through the top of a tin can and held taut, gives the sound of a lion's roar if a rosined cloth is drawn over the string. A small boy hidden behind the cut-out of a lion can attract attention with this device. A moving train sound is obtained by tacking sand paper to one or more points of a revolving wheel and running this in contact with a sanded strip on the floor. The sound of an aeroplane can be imitated by placing a card or thin piece of tin in contact with the blades of an electric fan. The phonograph is a very useful sound-maker, especially if it is electrically operated and provided with a repeating attachment.

Light.

Flood lighting or spot lighting color displays will win more attention. Changing the color and direction of lighting on a display will create the optical illusion of movement. To get attention for the lobby from passersby across the street, a spotlight can be used from an adjacent building. The sky-signal, shooting against the sky a searchlight from the top of the marquee to designate the starting time of program units, has been used to good effect and can be seen at great distance.

Variety.

In arranging lobby displays, it is very important to remember that novelty ceases with repetition; therefore do not use the same effect too often. If you have a cut-out head display this week, do not repeat it again for a month or so. If you have a built-in box office this week, do not use the same idea again the following week. There is plenty of material available for lobby display, and plenty of ideas to make variety possible.

Box Office.

The built-in front is no longer in common use to-day. However, the built-in box office with the ticket seller appropriately costumed achieves the same result at less expense. The built-in box office displays in most common use are: the log cabin, the alarm clock, the magazine cover, the champagne bottle, the bridal arch, the lighthouse, the windmill, the Sphinx, the money bag, the lantern, the powder puff, the statue of Liberty. A study of the trade papers will soon acquaint the manager who has not practiced built-in effects with the possibilities of this method of display. Consult Chapter XIII.

Suggestions.

Many familiar but novel ideas to enhance the attentionwinning power of the lobby have been conceived. These are generally known. Their use depends upon the layout of the particular lobby, the type of production to be advertised, the policy of the theatre, and the type of prospect to whom appeal is made. They are summarized here to serve as reminders:

Loan Exhibit.

1. Merchants, clubs and societies loan materials for display in the lobby. This material suggests the locale, the spirit, and

the atmosphere of the current production—for instance, Oriental rugs, incense burners, antiques displayed for an Oriental picture; flags, medals, uniforms, guns and swords loaned by an historical society for a war production, or trophies loaned by the American Legion, with a uniformed soldier standing on guard.

Where the material displayed requires a showcase, this, too, can be borrowed. The display of a card with the name of the merchant or society co-operating is usually necessary. There is a mutual advantage in the display of a loan exhibit; the merchant, club or society has interest called to its product or to its purpose, and, of course, a new interest is added to the lobby.

- 2. Local police departments have loaned for lobby display their collection of criminals' weapons, blackjacks, brass knuckles, masks, lamps, burglary tools. These are best displayed for a production with the Raffles, thief, or crime theme.
- 3. A treasure chest half filled with sand mixed with dry gold paint in which is partly buried cheap jewelry from the five-and-ten-cent store is appropriate for productions with the buccaneer or treasure-hunt theme. The treasure chest, if lighted with a concealed spotlight from above, is a brilliant, sparkling attention-winner.
- 4. The giant book built of compo board has various forms. It can be constructed to resemble the cover of a novel from which a photoplay has been made. It can be constructed to resemble an open book in which striking sentiments or descriptions are printed. Cut-out stills can be pasted on different parts of the page. By electrical contact, the pages can be moved so that six or eight different displays are shown in the same space.
- 5. During Greater Movie Season, Paramount Week, Laugh Month and similar occasions, a decorated table can be set in the corner of the lobby from which heralds can be distributed. One of the theatre staff during certain hours can be at this post to answer questions concerning coming attractions.
- 6. The local Army or Navy recruiting station will loan equipment, and even station a soldier or sailor in uniform to add interest to a lobby for a production whose theme centers on Army or Navy life.

- 7. A gigantic enlargement of a telegram from the star or director of the feature picture, or from the manager of a leading theatre in another city, commending the production can be displayed with compo backing on top of the marquee or above the curb.
- 8. Smouldering fire effects, especially for display on top of the marquee, can be obtained by using steam exhaust and colored flood lighting.
- 9. A rotating wheel of compo board moved by a fan motor slowly revolving cut-out heads of different stars in the production gets added attention because of the movement and the novelty of the display. The design of the wheel can be prepared according to the poster material available.
- 10. Souvenirs supplied by local merchants or samples of their product can be distributed in the lobby when the product or the souvenir has some relation to the theme of the photoplay.
- 11. For comedy features, comedy effects win attention. The use of a concealed phonograph playing the Okeh laughing record enhances a display.
- 12. An Indian squaw weaving blankets or making miniature bark canoes wins attention for the Indian photoplay.
- 13. A gypsy in gaudy costume visible through a tent flap can distribute heralds or small fortune cards with copy concerning appropriate photoplay.
- 14. Thumb print contests attract passersby. Printers' ink smeared on glass plate can be used. A prize is given for the thumb imprint most closely resembling that of the star in the photoplay. This is particularly effective for photoplays with a mystery or detective theme.
- 15. A cartoonist in the lobby drawing silhouettes of patrons in a laughing pose attracts interest for a comedy program. The patron agrees to pose in the same laughing posture that was caused by situations in the comedy. A sign announcing the scene or the situation which provoked laughter is hung up, and patrons coming from the theatre volunteer to pose laughing as they did within the theatre. The silhouette is given to the posing patron as a souvenir. A collection of amusing silhouettes can be used as a background for the display.

- 16. Safe-breaking. A safe is placed in the lobby covered with compo board frame suitably lettered announcing the contest and carrying copy for the production. Merchants donate prizes to be placed in the safe. The prizes are won by the first one who discovers the safe combination. Clues to this combination may be carried in the advertisements of merchants who contribute the prizes.
- 17. Comments and laudatory sentences from newspaper reviews can be displayed enlarged against a compo board background with the heading, "What the Critics Think."
- 18. The peep-show barrel. A barrel with a hole in the top carries within a poster, or slogan, or miniature display, or cut-out, which is lighted so that passersby looking through the peephole can read. The peep-show announcement stimulates their curiosity and awakens their interest in the photoplay.
- 19. Toy balloons painted with comical faces can be strung across the side of the marquee. If properly hung, these toy balloons can be kept constantly in motion by an electric fan.
- 20. A home-made device resembling a thermometer is hung with an announcement card stating that the reaction of the audience is being registered. The "thermometer" is marked to read "Thrills—Laughter—Suspense—Joy—Delight," etc. Movement is given by a slowly revolving motor.
- 21. Miniature displays. On a small platform, novel displays can be arranged by using toys which local toy stores loan in return for a credit card—for instance, a desert scene on a sand-covered base with miniature tents, miniature camels, etc. Other scenes commonly used are the miniature railroad, the miniature race track, the farm, the lighthouse. Animated toys, which are now made with so many amusing and interest-winning effects, can be used.
- 22. A cake of ice made from distilled water with a poster or announcement tin frozen inside for sidewalk display.
- 23. For the photoplay with the aeroplane theme, toy aeroplanes revolving on strings hung from the ceiling win the attention of the passersby.
- 24. Clocks with stationary hands pointing to cut-out figures, or crazy clocks with revolving hands against a background of announcements and cut-out figures. (Clock faces

can also be used to indicate the starting time of different units of the program.)

- 25. A cardboard telescope with a cut-out, lighted, at the end can be used like other peep-show displays.
- 26. Circus decorations. Bright-colored tent, peep-show box, wheel of chance, barker and snake charmer for carnival or circus photoplay.
- 27. Hairdresser to give a curl like that worn by the star to lady patrons.
- 28. Plaster busts of the all-star cast or of the featured player, properly draped and spotlighted.
- 29. Gold nuggets. Stones or coal painted with bronze and spotlighted.
 - 30. School co-operative displays are explained elsewhere.
- 31. A treasure chest in the lobby to which merchants have contributed contents. This chest is locked. In the window of each co-operating merchant is a clue to the combination, or keys are hidden about town, or clues inserted in packages sold by merchants and these clues lead to the key-store in town where the key can be obtained with the proper password.

Box Office.

There is a real advantage in having the box office near the building line and in clear view of passersby. The brilliantly light box office is in itself an attraction. Strip lights outlining the decorative box office are advocated. Dull, heavy curtains should not be used. It is evident that the appearance of the cashier can be either an advantage or a disadvantage. Price schedules, especially when admission price is a distinctive selling advantage for a particular theatre, should be displayed just as any bargain price tag should be displayed in a window.

With an exceptional photoplay, the announcement that the box office will open one hour earlier than usual to accommodate the crowds is in itself an implicit argument that the program is exceptional. Even when the theatre is not open, the lobby has a selling value. Morning crowds passing the theatre even before it opens, will be attracted by displays. In cities where Sunday showings are not permitted, the theatre front on Sunday should not look like a cemetery entrance. Many

people will pass the theatre, and inasmuch as you are paying rent for Sunday as well as for any other day, use your valuable space to good advantage. On Sunday evenings keep a few lights on, so that passersby will be attracted to your display. Incidentally, this use of the theatre front on Sunday not only helps to advertise, but is a potent reminder to the community of the entertainment that is denied them because of legislation. This regular reminder will help to shape popular opinion in favor of Sunday entertainment.

Conclusion.

The lobby is your show window. Your product is your program. Your show window can make immediate sales. There is plenty of standard advertising material available. It is cheap. The rental for lobby space is expensive. Give just as much attention to the layout of your lobby as you do to the layout of a newspaper advertisement. In both cases the space is expensive. The lobby is primarily a problem in layout, and it is best solved by the individual manager.

CHAPTER XVII

THE MARQUEE

THE advertising influence of the marquee is not limited to the program announcement it carries. The condition of its maintenance determines passersby impressions of the quality of the institution and the quality of its programs. The most effectively chosen program announcements on a marquee that is carelessly maintained will carry less appeal.

The space for the advertising message is limited. But the entire marquee can be so maintained that every detail of it helps to attract attention to the theatre and consequently helps to sell tickets. As far as signs are concerned, efficiency depends on attraction power, clearness of meaning, legibility and appearance.

Lettering.

Because the position of the marquee is so favorable for advertising, because of heavy circulation, extreme care should be given to the selection of the lettering that it will carry. It is not good management to devote considerable time to selecting the wording of a newspaper advertisement, and leave the selection of the marquee lettering to the electrician or some other member of the staff.

The marquee is an expensive advertising medium. It is not merely an ornament. Its original cost is heavy and its daily lighting cost is not negligible. This matter of cost plus its importance as an advertising medium justifies careful attention.

It is evident that the marquee should announce the current attraction rather than future programs. It is not good business to establish the general rule that marquee lettering should carry the name of the star and the name of the current production and then leave to the electrician or to another member of the house staff the routine following-through of this rule. This set routine makes the marquee announcement monotonous

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and often means that important announcements are not properly emphasized.

Every program cannot be handled in the same way. There are cases where the star's name alone in larger letters will carry more appeal than the star's name in smaller letters with the name of the production. At other times the particular star has no great following in the community and the name of the production alone in larger letters makes a stronger appeal.

Location.

The location of the theatre should be carefully studied to determine how each side of the marquee should be used. There are theatres so located that passerby traffic towards one side of the marquee is very light. The weaker message belongs on this side of the marquee. If the theatre is on the side street so that passerby traffic from one direction is practically negligible, the expense of changing announcements on this side of the marquee and keeping them lighted at all hours is not always justified.

If the front of the marquee faces on a very wide street so that the message must be read across the street, it is not good business to use letters so small that they cannot be read easily from across the street. In general the stroke of the letter should be one-tenth to one-fifteenth of the letter height. Too broad a stroke for letter length will cause blur, while too narrow a stroke decreases distance legibility. Then there are theatres where the traffic in front of the theatre and from both directions towards the side of the marquee is equally heavy, so that the same care must be given to the selection of a message for all three sides. At the sides of the marquee short wording on a long attraction sign should be placed near the curb rather than near the building line. All this only emphasizes the fact that each manager must determine by the location of his marquee and by considering the passerby traffic for which each message is intended, the wording of various announcements.

Marquee space for program announcements is limited. The selection of the message is very much like the selection of a

newspaper head-line. There are just so many letter spaces. These spaces must be used to flash the program message so that those who are hurrying by the theatre will get in a flash what is the most appealing message that could be set in the amount of space available.

The announcements should be correct. Spelling should be accurate. Misleading and awkward abbreviations should be guarded against. If there are only twelve letter spaces and two or more words are used with a total of twelve letters, use a differently colored initial letter for each word to avoid confusion. Lamps out will very often give grotesque spellings, besides a spotty appearance. It is not wise to scribble on a memorandum the lettering of the announcement and then leave it to the electrician or some other member of the staff to decipher this scribble and to place the letters as best they can.

Forms.

It is useful to have forms prepared so that the manager can print in on this form the exact lettering and the exact placing. This form can be duplicated so that a supply is always on hand. The form will be lined so that each letter space is clearly indicated. The advantage of such a form is that the lettering will be accurate and properly spaced. Another advantage is that the form can be kept on file so that the manager will have a complete listing of all the marquee announcements that have been used. This record is useful at a time when the manager is studying his marquee announcements to determine how they can be improved. Some managers keep a record of the marquee announcements at competitive theatres. Others study how marquee space is used in other cities to get ideas that will improve their own work. In the appendix will be found a practical form of marquee record.

Changes.

Changes in announcement signs should be made at a time when passersby will not be inconvenienced by ladders and sign racks on the sidewalk. It is not advisable to make these changes when patrons are entering or leaving the theatre, or when sidewalk traffic is heavy. This should be done after the house is closed or early in the morning.

Color Appeal.

If colored lamps are used they should be selected so that the color appeal will be seasonal. For instance, it is not advisable to use red lettering during the summer months when patrons are seeking escape from heat. Green and amber colored lamps are to be preferred for the summer months. The color of lamp used can sometimes be determined by the title or type of production. For instance, the manager who used green colored lamps to advertise "Inferno" during the winter months would have had a more attractive announcement with red lamps. The use of amber lamps for the title "The Love of Gold" would be more appealing than green lamps for the same title. Of course every title does not offer possibilities of a color appeal that will be appropriate, but there are titles that do, and the manager should be alert to take advantage of this opportunity.

During holiday times it is effective to have the marquee lamps of a color that is symbolic of the holiday. Managers in communities where there is heavy patronage from the nearby college use the college colors in border lighting when there are athletic contests played in the city.

A caution to be suggested in the use of colored lamps is to avoid a spotty appearance by using lamps of different tints. If lamps are dipped and replacements are made so that the new lamp is fresher and brighter than the others, and if this is repeated often, after most of the lamps have been exposed to the weather, spotty appearance is certain. In replacing faded or burnt-out lamps, match the new lamp as closely as possible with the others by using a shadow test-box. The shadow test-box should be used to match even new lamps, because it is impossible at the lamp factories to have the color of sprayed lamps and of natural colored lamps exactly alike. Even in the same box from the factory you will find light, medium and dark lamps of the same color. Lamps in attractive frames should be of uniform wattage.

Cost.

Certain practical suggestions can be followed to reduce lamp expense for marquee lighting:

- Never use gas filled lamps where they will be exposed to the rain, because heated lamps of this type will crack in the rain.
- 2. Never use gas filled lamps where vibration is heavy, because the filament of these lamps becomes brittle and breaks easily with vibration.
- The socket of lamps exposed to the rain should be protected with a rubber cap, because the rain can cause burnout at the socket.
- 4. Sprayed or dipped lamps are to be preferred to natural colored lamps because the latter are more expensive, look black when not lighted and give a glare effect because of the visible filament.
- In dipping lamps let the lamp get hot before applying the dip, so that it will evaporate more quickly and give a more even surface.
- 6. When removing dip do not permit the remover solution to get into the crack of the base because it will loosen the base and make the lamp useless.
- 7. Keep a record of lamp installations, remembering that the average life of lamps is 1,000 hours, with 230 hours as the minimum and 2,200 hours as the maximum for individual lamps.

Safety.

The safety factor in marquee maintenance is important. The marquee is erected to hold so many pounds per square foot. There is a limit to the load that any marquee can carry. The manager should know what the safety load is for his marquee. Placing heavy displays on the roof of the marquee has caused collapse. Permitting crowds to stand on the marquee to watch a parade has caused collapse. After heavy snow falls, particularly if the snow drifts to the front of the marquee and is turned to ice by rain and cold, the marquee may collapse. Immediately after every snow storm it is practical to clear the snow from the top of the marquee. New signs and displays should not be hung without proper authorization from the local building department.

Maintenance.

The marquee is built so that a slope allows for draining. If the draining is not perfect water collects on the roof of the marquee and seeps through to damage the paint beneath or the signs. No display should be set on the roof of the marquee so close to the roof that there is not enough room for the passage of water to the drains. The drain protector should be inspected regularly. If this protector is broken so that paper and waste material can get into the drain, there is serious danger of stoppage. Very often the drain protector is kicked aside and the drain left uncovered. This makes drain stoppage very possible, because the drain pipes of the marquee are not large enough to carry off the rubbish that would go down with the rain from the marquee roof. In winter months remove ice from the drain protector. The drain pipes can be cleaned regularly with a strong solution of lye or caustic soda and water. Perfect draining of the marquee lengthens its life and cuts down repair bills.

The under-surface of the marquee should be painted regularly. Bright white paint on this surface acts as a reflector and brightens the entrance to the theatre considerably. Regular painting is not only important for the sake of attraction and general cleanliness so that the proper impression of the theatre will be created, but is also important because of its attention value.

Economies.

Lighting under the marquee is usually on two or more circuits. Consequently all the roof lights need not be on at once. At the closing hours when seats are no longer being sold, half the lights can be used. This economy means a considerable saving over a period of time. After the house is closed it is well to keep one light beneath the marquee for safety's sake. If the theatre front is entirely dark, the sidewalk under the marquee becomes a danger center. Local police will appreciate the burning of a single light under the marquee during the night after the house is closed.

The time of throwing on the marquee lights can be determined by the season and the type of day. On a very dark afternoon the use of the marquee lights is effective. It is not good business to determine a certain hour for throwing on the marquee lights and observing that, no matter what the weather conditions. On a dark afternoon, if street traffic is heavy, the fact that your announcements and your marquee are bright when others cannot be noticed, will help attract patronage that otherwise might not be attracted. Take advantage of dark afternoons and early evening darkness and be the first to catch crowds with a lighted marquee. The manager should be familiar with what it costs to keep the marquee lights burning by the hour. He considers this cost in determining whether the advertising advantage of using the marquee lights at certain hours is justified. The cost can be determined by finding the local charge per kilowatt-hour, and multiplying that by the number of kilowatts used per hour to keep marquee announcements burning. This cost will also make the manager realize how much money is wasted by keeping all the marquee lights and announcement signs burning after the box office is closed. Marquee lights should be used economically as well as effectively.

The cost of marquee maintenance is seriously increased by carelessness in handling letters. Letters should be stored on racks in a dry place. They should not be piled one on top of the other or strewn about the basement floor where they can be scratched and broken and soiled. At very small cost a carriage frame can be built on which letters can be carried from the basement to the marquee. If they are carried in armfuls a slippery sidewalk can cause a fall and the breakage will be heavy. The use of the carrying rack is practical and economical. This rack can have a panel in which the electrician slips the card with the marquee lettering as prepared by the manager. This prevents any guess work in setting in the letters.

The letters should be washed regularly with soap and hot water. Do not use a soap with a strong alkali because this will damage the coating of colored lamps.

Outage.

Announcement signs should be watched for outage. If three or four lamps are out on your sign, your announcement may be unintelligible or at least the impression created will not be favorable. Black spots on a bright sign are an evidence of carelessness which is interpreted by many as typical of the carelessness that prevails in other details of operation. It is advisable to inspect all lamping and flasher action every evening.

Cleaning.

The iron work of marquees and signs should be carefully maintained. The weather causes corrosion, and serious damage is possible by neglect. In some sections of the country it is necessary to scrape all iron work every six months. The iron work after scraping should be painted with red lead before it is finally painted in the color that will be exposed. If the surface painting is put on without scraping and red lead, corrosion will spread beneath the outer painting. Every exposed piece of iron or steel, even the bolts and the guy wires and the nuts, the buckles and the braces, should be painted not only for appearances' sake but to prolong the life of the marquee. Turnbuckles should be tightened regularly to prevent sagging and strain. The interior of boxes which reflect letter lighting should be painted regularly so that the amount of reflection is not cut down. Why pay a high current bill if a few dollars for white paint is not expended for the reflector surface to keep the lighting at its full efficiency. Lamps behind letter spaces which are covered with blanks should be cut off by loosening them at the socket so they will not burn uselessly.

Electrical Maintenance.

The electrical maintenance is important because without proper supervision emergencies occur or heavy expense is incurred for repairs that could have been avoided. For instance, in cold weather the oil for your motor may congeal and the motor will stick and cause trouble. See that the oil is protected from the weather and kept in the proper condi-

tion. The flasher collects copper dust and dirt and if these are not removed regularly, efficiency is lessened and damage and a repair bill are the result. The brushes should be trimmed regularly, otherwise contact breaking with sparking causes waste. Flasher brushes should be replaced when worn. Use brushes that fit perfectly and not makeshift brushes.

Motor belts should be kept pliable. Every four months the belts should be soaked in neats-foot oil. This prevents the leather from drying up, adds to the efficiency of the motor and prolongs the life of your equipment. Flasher box covers should fit tightly so that rain and moisture will not damage mechanism.

The danger of overloading circuits by plugging in a special wire should be considered. Do not try to use lamps of a higher wattage than the wiring was intended to carry. The manager should be familiar with the load that every circuit is able to carry. This information is available from the manufacturer of the marquee or from the office of the local fire underwriters. The use of makeshift fuses in an attempt to overload a circuit is a fire-hazard.

The electrical equipment of the marquee will not maintain itself. It requires constant supervision.

Check-up.

Each week the manager should check up the maintenance given motors, belts, flashers, insulation, brushes, fuses, flasher box, switches, plugs, sockets, conduits, etc. The iron work of the marquee should be inspected seasonally, with careful attention given to all exposed iron work, the tightening of bolts and nuts, guy wires and turn-buckles. A wooden platform built about six inches above the marquee will protect the roof when persons walking there might otherwise damage it.

Conclusion.

Besides the particular program announcement, the marquee has a perpetual advertising influence, as it can give a quality impression of the institution. The clean, tidy, accurate, well-painted, well-illuminated marquee is noticed by practically everyone who passes the theatre. Because the average theatre

marquee is carelessly maintained, the theatre with the effectively maintained marquee stands out very favorably by contrast.

View your marquee as it is viewed by prospective patrons outside the theatre. Remember that a far greater number of people see the outside of your theatre than see the inside. They can be so impressed by what they see outside that they are anxious to see the inside. All the efforts made to maintain the inside of the theatre will be wasted on those who do not come inside the theatre, simply because the appearance of the marquee was so slovenly that it did not invite. The marquee ranks in importance with any of the other advertising mediums of the theatre. Strange to say it is an advertising expense that must be met no matter how it is used. Therefore it is the part of good management to get the full measure of efficiency from this advertising medium.

CHAPTER XVIII

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

THE streets, the air, the outside of buildings, the park lakes, athletic stadiums, the river, are so many avenues or pathways along which a theatre's message can be circulated to thousands.

Many prospective customers do not pass the theatre lobby and do not pay much attention to newspaper advertising. These prospects can be reached by the activities discussed here. Because these activities reach patrons away from their homes and in many cases in the neighborhood of the theatre, they are more likely to make immediate sales than advertising which is read within the home. In some cases where newspaper advertising rates are excessively high and the theatre's budget very limited, circulation of a theatre's message can be secured by outdoor activities at a very small expense.

The outdoor activities discussed here include any circulation of a theatre's message outside the theatre, with the exception of regulation billboard stands (for this consult pages 133 and 134) and window displays and co-operative activities (for which consult pages 236 and 243).

Theatre advertising moves in cycles. At times outdoor activities are in the ascendancy and are heavily emphasized. Then, because they have become too familiar for frequent use, they cease to carry much appeal. Their value for a particular theatre's message is determined by the manager who is familiar with local conditions. If outdoor activities have not been tried in your community for a long time, there may exist a splendid opportunity for novel advertising.

The effectiveness of this advertising depends upon the novelty of its appeal, upon its appropriateness for the program advertised, and upon the appropriateness for the type of prospects for whom it is intended. It should not be overdone. When the novelty has worn off, stop it.

Some will consider the outdoor advertising activities discussed here as undignified.

Advertising can be clever and unusual and novel without being offensive. The very nature of entertainment requires that its advertising appeal carry a touch of excitement and the flavor of the exceptional. It should not be sedate and stiffly dignified. Those whose preference is for the stiffly dignified advertising, will find competitors with a keener sense of showmanship and a better understanding of human nature taking away their customers.

Excuses.

When outdoor activities are neglected with the excuse "they are not dignified," this excuse sometimes covers unwillingness to do extra work; for, frankly, outdoor activities require planning and real work to be effective. The "mahogany desk manager," the majority of whose hours are spent in an office toying with artistic display cards or laying out fancy newspaper advertising, may resent the fact that hard work, and perhaps the use of overalls and tools, are required for these activities. This is something that does not come ready-made. The standard poster materials, banners, etc., are indispensable materials; but the preparation of the materials and the carrying through of the activity is something that no one can arrange for except the individual manager.

Good Taste.

Activities which are offensive and in bad taste should be avoided. For instance, an exhibitor closely approximated the Board of Health's smallpox warning with a three-inch "smallpox" heading over an announcement which stated that the theatre was not quarantined, but that the inmates of the house where the poster was placed might see what happened to the quarantined family in the photoplay showing at his theatre. As a result, not only did the householders object to the shock caused by such a poster, but because there was an ordinance against the copying of municipal signs the exhibitor had to pay a fine, besides losing the patronage of those who were offended.

Suggestions.

It is evident that the suggestions which follow are not universally practicable. The selection of any outdoor activity depends upon the type of community and type of theatre for which it is used. Obviously, different appeals are required for different programs. Consequently the following suggestions are summarized only to give necessary details to convey the general idea and to stimulate thought along similar lines.

1. Trucks.—Perhaps the oldest form of outdoor advertising is the truck perambulator. Its possibilities are limitless. Frames are built large enough to carry a 24-sheet, or even a 24-sheet and a 6. There are two of these, angled to lean against each other, and these are mounted on a truck and slowly paraded through the streets. It is nothing more than a traveling billboard with a greater circulation than any single billboard location could get. This is the familiar "A" board in 24-sheet size.

An improvement on this is to build cut-outs, and dress the truck to suggest a tableau float. With a little work, really handsome effects can be gained. These floats can be covered with electric lights, and costumed human figures used instead of lithographic cut-outs.

Sometimes the truck is fitted out with sound devices such as the lion roar (which any trap drummer can make), along with rope or rod bars set in front of a display den for a cutout lion, to advertise an animal play. In winter, a sleigh can be used instead of a truck.

2. Trolley.—A still further improvement is the bannered trolley car. An old car is chartered, provided with canvas sides to carry lithographs, and run over the tracks of the transit system in the non-rush hours. Sometimes a frame is erected on a flat work-car instead of using an old passenger car. Some transit lines have a special car with side lights, which permits its use at night. A single bannered trolley can cover a town pretty thoroughly, and might also be run into the country to get in the automobile trade. The car windows can be left exposed and cut-outs of stars' heads be pasted to the glass to

suggest a trolley party. A small band, a boy with a bell, or a loud-playing phonograph can be carried to help attract attention. For comedy advertising, the phonograph with the Okeh laughing record and an amplifier can be used.

- 3. "A" Boards.—Where there is an Army or Navy recruiting station in town, it is often possible to obtain the choice locations used for their "A" boards by relating some angle of the photoplay advertised to the service—for instance, "The Marines want 'Men of Steel'—See the picture at the Colonial Theatre, and see the world with the Marines." The picture dealt with steel manufacture, but it supplied a connection line, and that was all the recruiting sergeant needed to approve the "A" board space for the theatre announcement.
- 4. Hanger.—One of the old standbys is the "doorknob hanger." Originally this was merely an announcement card with a string loop by which it could be hung upon a doorknob to prevent the advertisement from being blown away. In its improved form the string loop has been replaced by a die-cut hole, which makes for easier handling. But the essential features are retained, one of which is the assurance that the card will stay put, and win the attention of those using or passing the door.
- 5. Card Hanger.—A recent improvement on the doorknob hanger is the "Good Morning" card. These are cards tacked to sharpened lath and stuck into lawns or in curb crevices facing the house. The card carries some such message as "Good morning. Remember 'Child of the Waves' opens to-day at the Metropolitan." It may be merely the regular announcement of theatre, program, and play-date. Generally, cheap stock and block letters are used.

Plant Cards.—Window cards on sharpened lath are widely used to stick into snowbanks in winter, and in summer they can be thrust into the dirt piles where there is sewer ditching being done. A street trench can blossom out with the announcement card advice to "Cross this bridge to see Colleen Moore at the Star" planted at each plank cross-over. One manager who looked ahead, planted a number of these cards

on the ice just before the spring breakup, working above the town, and for two days the cards went drifting under the heavily traveled bridges which spanned the current, bringing the theatre's message in a novel way to many.

- 6. Newsstands.—Newsstands generally occupy strategic positions, both downtown and in residential districts. Many dealers use some sort of weight to keep the papers from blowing away. Noticing this, a manager painted hardwood two-byfours, about the width of a newspaper a bright red, with a message about his attraction lettered in white. The idea worked so well and the newsmen were so well pleased that he had 300 made up and he strips these with block type streamers, obtaining a permanent display. Newsstands can often be used for some special feature in the news reels, or the announcement of a photo-play from a serial running in a daily paper. They provide desirable locations for special paper where lithograph stands would not be permitted.
- 7. Direction Arrows.—Direction arrows are useful tack cards. These may be cut arrow shape or merely have one end pointed and the other nicked to a V. These should be printed in two styles, so that they can be used on either side of the street, with some such message as "To The Road to Mandalay" at the Victoria." These can be tacked well into the country, always with the arrow pointing in the direction of the theatre. The mileage to the theatre might also be indicated.
- 8. Sidewalk Stencil.—It is practicable to make a stencil of a large footprint for sidewalk marking. These can be done in water color for several blocks from the theatre, the tracks leading to the house. When the groundwork is dry, they can then be stenciled with the name of the feature.

In this and all similar stunts it is very important that police permission be obtained in advance, if trouble is to be avoided. On the other hand, a manager deliberately planned to be arrested for painting the sidewalks in oils. There was a humorous story in the newspaper to the effect that he had been sentenced to remove the signs, and for an entire day one of his men worked under the direction of the largest policeman on the force to eliminate the signs with scraper and turpentine. A small donation to the police fund, plus the aid of the district leader, helped give the theatre this exceptional advertisement.

- 9. Lamp Posts.—Where the police permit, the base of lamp posts may be enclosed temporarily with compo board on which posting is placed. No more desirable locations can be imagined. It is almost as satisfactory to board up telegraph poles; but here both the police and the telephone or light company must be consulted. The advantage of such a location lies in the fact that it is out of the ordinary, and the unusual is the keynote of all outdoor stunts.
- 10. Banners.—Banners across the street or hanging from the flagpoles of important buildings are helpful, particularly the former. The banner too often droops from the flagpole and the message cannot be read; but the flagpole is useful for hanging the effigy of some comedy character, and more than one stuffed Harold Lloyd kicked business into the box office for "High and Dizzy" from a point 60 feet or more above the street. The street banner in a shadow box can be illuminated for night display, if the effigy cannot be spotlighted.
- 11. The Dummy.—Somewhat akin to this is a stunt more than half a century old. A man on a tall building engages in a terrific fight with a dummy. Just as the supposed man is about to be cast over the cornice and dashed into the horrified crowd, a banner is cut loose advertising the attraction. The banner can be re-rolled and dropped a dozen times before the novelty wears off.
- 12. Holiday Card.—The holiday card has occasional use. This is a regulation doorknob hanger, but instead of the usual copy, it reads "Closed to permit the staff to see . . . at the . . . Theatre." It is most useful if put out after midnight on the eve of a holiday. The effect of a row of stores, all tightly closed and carrying the same sign, is decidedly good. It can also be used for a Sunday showing, where Sunday performances are permitted.

- 13. Milk Bottles.—The doorknob idea has been applied to milk bottles. Each bottle carries its small hanger and some message more or less closely connecting milk with the picture advertised. It does not have to be a very close connection, as witness: "Poor milk is 'The Barrier' to good health," used to advertise the play of that title, with copy that the milk supplied was pure. Milk bottle caps can also be lettered appropriately.
- 14. Radiator Hanger.—In another form the hanger appears as the automobile radiator hanger, the card being larger and creased so that it hangs straight down when placed on the radiator cap. Because of the variance in the size of the caps, it is a good plan to have two sizes of holes cut.
- 15. Radiator Cover.—Similar to this is the automobile "chest protector" or radiator cover, used in cold weather to cut down the flow of cold air into the grill. Old insert cards can be used for this purpose, and should be printed up with institutional advertising rather than with copy for a single picture, since many of them will be in use for a long time. Get these printed up in October, and on the first cold snap give out a few. As soon as they are seen, other drivers will come and ask for them.
- 16. Headlights.—Automobiles are useful in a variety of ways. Paint the headlights to suggest a pair of crossed eyes and you will get a laugh from everyone which will be transferred to the comedy you are advertising with banners and cut-outs carried by the car.
- 17. Wrecked Car.—A wrecked automobile parked at a prominent corner can be made to illustrate the effects of reckless driving. The stunt has been tied to scores of titles and will be appropriate for many more. Because they are supposed to convey a warning, the police will permit their parking at prominent points, and the automobile club will supplement your argument if aid is needed. If you cannot park the car, you can at least parade it on a float, or have it towed around town by a wrecking car. Giving the garage advertising space on the car will cut the cost to the material for the signs.

- 18. Safety Campaign.—Police will often co-operate for a "safety first" idea. More than once a safety campaign planned for a picture, has been continued for a week or two at the request of the police. There is no stunt that will win a banner permit more quickly, and you can even utilize the traffic control semaphores for hangers or posters if you are persuasive.
- 19. Traffic Cards.—Two classes of auto stunts are passing into the discard. The first of these is the card, more or less cleverly suggesting the traffic violation cards, affixed by the police. The wording is changed to summon the recipient to the theatre instead of court. In a majority of instances the shock at the sight of the summons nullifies the advertising value of the idea. A few may enjoy the humor of the hoax, but most persons will resent it. Another nuisance which once was so common as to call for prohibitive local legislation is the windshield sticker. Originally, these were safety first slogans, and as such won approval, but they quickly degenerated into straight advertising banners plastered without permission on the glass of the windshields, affixed in the absence of the owner. They were promptly removed, so served no useful purpose. After a few sessions with the putty knife, the owner was apt to declare war on the theatre. One form of windshield sticker carried an offer of a pass if the owner would drive his car to the theatre from three to seven days later with the sticker still affixed.
- 20. Handle Hanger.—A more effective stunt is the handle hanger which reads in bold type, "This car for sale." Much smaller lettering makes the complete message read: "This car is not for sale as the owner will need it to drive to the . . . Theatre next week to see '. . ." Hung by a string loop, it is easily removed and may get an appreciative grin from the owner as well as from the passersby.
- 21. Tire Disc.—An almost standard stunt is the spare tire disc, a cardboard circle fitting inside the rim of the spare carried on the back of taxis. This is done by arrangement with the taxi companies to split the advertisement with the taxi company as "Take a Yellow Taxi to the . . . Theatre to see '. . . " Where a permanent arrangement is effected,

there should be a compo board circle cut, and the weekly change of message should be printed on light paper along with a cut-out of a one-sheet to be pasted down. Where the cards are regularly used, they should be as different as possible for each change. A weekly pass to each driver can supplement whatever arrangement is made with the company.

- 22. Stickers.—Sometimes it can be arranged to place advertising matter within the car, or to use stickers. Rate cards can be printed in quantities, the back printed each week for the current attraction. A particularly apt title like "Watch Your Step" or "Be Careful" may even make the grade as a window poster.
- 23. Driverless Car.—The "driverless" car, such as has been built for comedy and mystery pictures, can be achieved by draping the front seat with black scrim or wire gauze, and putting a dummy steering wheel in the back seat of the tonneau. The car is driven by a man crouching in the well of the front seat. It is more simply done by veiling the windows of a sedan with scrim, to suggest drawn curtains. A particularly good driver should be used for these stunts, or damage suits are likely to follow. Of course, the car can be appropriately bannered or boxed in with wall board to carry posters.
- 24. Varieties.—The automobile may be used to take a "bride and groom" around town in a decorated car for marriage titles. Cut-outs suggesting a petting party can be used for the back window where the laws permit. Any odd character garbed as in the photoplay can be taken about town, or a "mysterious" person can use the car for shopping trips and general perambulation. One of the best attractions is an old and disreputable looking darky, appropriately costumed, riding in the back seat of an open car with a white driver and footman in front. This is not suggested, of course, for the Southern States.
- 25. Parades.—Many dealers are glad to lend their cars for parade if they get adequate advertisement. Parades of from eight to fifteen cars have been achieved with no other connection than the fact that the star of the advertised play used this make of car in the production.

- 26. Auto Frames.—With wall board you can turn an old car into a railroad locomotive for a railroad play; or you can get a pair of off-center wheels for a Ford, and construct a bucking monster that is as good as the circus product when the car is properly built over with wall boards and posters.
- 27. Disc Wheels.—May be fabricated from compo board to be placed over the regular spokes to carry your advertising message, and these can be hung so that the disc rides free on the axle and is always in proper position for reading.
- 28. Family Car.—For comedies of a certain type, use an old Ford with a countryman in the driver's seat and eleven or more children packed into the tonneau. The car breaks down at every prominent crossing and the children pile out to watch their "father" work on the motor. When the crowd grows to proper size, a banner can be unfurled, and the party then piles aboard to repeat the stunt a few blocks further down.
- 29. Tractors.—Where they are permitted, tractors are even better than passenger cars, since they are less usual and make more noise. If you need an excuse, let them drag floats. No tractor parade ever requires a brass band to gain attention if the cutouts are left open—always with police permission, of course.
- 30. Prize Ring.—A five-ton truck with the sides of the box removed, will make a fine prize ring for a picture with a boxing match. It can be fitted up in regulation style with two boy boxers to put on a couple of fast rounds whenever the truck halts at the curb. A radio set can be installed to tune-in on various stations, and intermittently broadcast its own messages about the play. If a piano is used, a vocalist can sing the theme song, and a portion of the cost can be laid off to the music and phonograph stores handling the record. The float should work midtown in the morning, the mills and factories at the noon hour, and stay near the theatre in the afternoon and early evening.

The above suggestions do not exhaust the possibilities of the automobile for outdoor advertising, but they probably will suggest others.

- 31. Parades.—Another familiar outdoor activity is the street parade. Originally the parade was a march of the newsboys or Boy Scouts to the theatres for a special showing of some picture. Later it was discovered that orphans carried more appeal. Generally, orphanages are located in the outskirts, and business clubs are appealed to to get the youngsters to the theatre in loaned cars.
- 32. Costume Parade.—Long ago someone discovered the popularity of Chaplin impersonation, and organized a parade and impersonation contest for children. The parade would form some blocks away, march through the streets and wind up at the theatre. One such parade carried nearly 1,500 entrants and the judging was done by the mayor on the steps of the city hall. Following Chaplin, came Wesley Barry and Jackie Coogan contests and parade, and still later Baby Peggy parades which gave the girls more of a chance, though more than one Chaplin or Coogan contest was won by some girl impersonator.
- 33. Circus Parade.—Circus stories suggest clown parades, also miniature float parades with prizes for the best decorated express wagon, appropriately decorated for the photoplay. This is not unlike the regular baby parade, and will often bring out a line several blocks long.
- 34. Organization Parades.—It is not always the children who are pressed into service for parades. The police, firemen, letter carriers, Legion and even the K. K. K. have turned out to parade for special pictures. In a college town, the student body will turn out to escort the football heroes or basketball team to a theater where they are to be honor guests of the management.
- 35. Dog Parade.—The advent of the dog stars brought the dog parade, each child being invited to enter his or her pet, with prizes for the largest and smallest dogs, the handsomest and ugliest dogs, and whatever else could be thought of. The idea was to give as many prizes as possible. If police will permit, the dogs are parked outside the house while the children witness a special run of the film. If this is not permitted, each child is given a ticket for the following day.

- 36. Pet Parade.—A variant of the dog parade is a petstock parade, when everything from pet white mice to baby elephants are permitted. As many of the animals have to be traveled in cages, this sort of parade has a decidely pictorial aspect.
- 37. Child Parade.—Another form of parade follows the announcement that the first chapters of a serial are to be received at the depot on a certain train. The kids are invited to escort the film cans to the theatre and see the picture run. Probably the reels are already at the theatre, but dummy cans are brought out of the express office, placed on a decorated truck and taken to the theatre, followed by the children. They swarm into the house and are shown the first issue of the serial. This is a better start for a serial than the more general "free performance" without a parade, as it puts much more excitement into the showing.
- 38. Athletic Meet.—Closely related to the parade is the athletic meet, which can be held in front of the theatre or nearby. It is generally possible to obtain police permission to shut off one block, and here can be held scooter and foot races, roller-skating contests, jumping contests, etc., according to the type of photoplay which is the basis of the contest.
- 39. Contest.—If you are so fortunate as to have a vacant lot nearby, you can stage a series of Saturday morning contests that will interest all of the children and most of their elders. After the contest, a children's matinee can be held.

At all of these parades, it will cost but little to provide a couple of hundred horns or other noise-makers for the paraders.

- 40. One manager organized a disjointed parade by printing "passes" for a special matinee on cards about the size of a half-sheet. The child had to wear his pass unfolded to the theatre, and from every quarter came an unorganized parade of "sandwich men."
- 41. Novelty Parade.—This is merely an elaboration of the hat or mask idea for which the novelties supplied by the

producers on certain titles are used. Put out a few hundred hats and you scatter your parade all over town.

42. Raffles.—One of the old standbys is the "Raffles" stunt, taking its name from the first use of the idea. The basis of the idea is the discovery of a certain person and identification with a set phrase. The identifying phrase is something like "You are Raffles from the Star Theatre. Give me your reward."

If the newspaper co-operates, it is generally required that the identifier carry a copy of its latest issue. The "Raffles," who may be either a man or a woman, is supposed to be on the streets at certain times and places. Often a number of stores will be brought into co-operation and will offer a special prize if the Raffles is identified while in the store. In such event, the newspaper publishes a schedule of appearances each day, announcing that the Raffles will be in one store between twelve and half past, and in a second between then and one o'clock, and so on. Often the stunt is announced for a week and the "Raffles" is not put out until the last day, a reporter covering the route and describing happenings as though they had been witnessed by the "Raffles." The last day the real person, who has been held under cover, is turned out. The best Raffles is someone so well-known that no one would suppose him to be the mysterious person. In the larger cities selection is less important. But in a town where everyone knows everyone else, the selection of a "Raffles" is a matter for thought. The search can be worked for one large prize, the contest being over when this has been paid, or there can be a number of smaller prizes. In the latter case, the Raffles should take to cover as soon as a prize is paid and make an effectual change in costume before venturing out again. In a larger city it is safe to parade the Raffles, masked, for a day or two before the stunt, being careful to change the appearance as much as possible by means of the clothing.

This is not generally effective in a very small town, but can be worked in places of from 15,000 up. It has frequently been worked in New York, and was first used by the "New York World" about thirty years ago.

- 43. Masked Person.—A variant of this idea is to put a masked person on the streets, with an offer of a prize for the person who first identifies the character. This is better as a small-town stunt. By padding the clothing, a well-known local character may be made to look totally unlike himself. In this case, the mystery person is not accosted. You merely get a good look and then hustle down to the theatre to record your guess. In this case, also the Raffles routine of shopping can be gone through to give the stores a chance to co-operate.
- 44. Ambulance.—A standard comedy stunt is the ambulance parked in front of the theatre to carry out those who may be overcome with laughter. The ambulance may be paraded through the streets with signs to the effect that the occupant is being rushed to the hospital because he nearly died laughing at the named comedy. If you can get a man who can laugh naturally and infectiously, it will not hurt to have him stagger from the house, and be helped into the ambulance, laughing all the way. Once inside the ambulance, a phonograph can be set in motion with an amplifier to spread the sound.
- 45. Aeroplane.—Sky writing is not yet within the reach of the average exhibitor; but plane pilots of traveling airdromes can be induced to drop theatre announcements and a few passes. Most cities now have an altitude law which prevents the plane from flying low enough to permit lettering on the underside of the wings to be read, but these messages are useful at the flying field, where a crowd is apt to gather. If possible, use the plane during parades or above crowded beaches, amusement parks and athletic stadiums.
- 46. Kites.—If you cannot get an aeroplane, you can achieve good advertising with banners hung from box kites. A team of several kites can support a good-sized banner.
- 47. From the Roof.—You can arrange to toss a football off the roof of some high building, with a prize to the one who catches it. You can release a bunch of balloons, some of which carry passes. This may tie-up traffic for several blocks around, so be sure to arrange for police permission and co-operation,

or there will be trouble. The balloons should be air-inflated, but it will help to release a few gas balloons, each with a pass, which may travel several miles. The report of these balloons landing is always good for a press story the following morning to supplement the story of the local happening. If a football is used, select a building not more than six stories high. Balloons can be released from any height and not cause injury.

- 48. Pass Hunt.—This can be worked in a number of ways. The simplest is to hide a number of passes along the street near your theatre, depositing them in the very early morning hours. One can be folded and tucked between the wall and a sign, another fastened to an awning rod. The passes can be put anywhere, providing the search does not require the destruction of property. Give the children a Saturday in which to work, and their pursuit of the passes will give you a bally-hoo lasting several hours.
- 49. Treasure.—In a second form, passes or certificates good for other prizes are placed in tin cans, and planted somewhere in a vacant lot or on a beach or other place which would not be damaged by digging. Do this about a week in advance, to let the caches get "weathered" and use more than one location. Then advertise that on a certain day you will start the "Treasure Hunt," and have circulars ready telling where to dig. If you scatter the caches around town, you will have the children all around. If desired, you can veil the clues.
- 50. Point-to-Point Hunt.—This is more ambitious. The start is made from the theatre, all applicants being given a slip directing them to the first station. This may merely direct the holder to a certain store, or may be intentionally confusing, as "Ask the man who fits the world," which may be the store of a dealer in shoes who advertises, "We fit the world." Here a second slip directs the seeker to another station, where a third slip is given, with a clue to the next station, and so on to the final location of the treasure. To prevent the hunters from following some earlier contestant, the winner should be required to exhibit a full set of slips, proving that all stations have been visited. The first person to arrive at the goal gets the first prize, and so on, as long as the prizes last. Sometimes the

chase is from store to store, and at each point some small gift is made, as a lollipop, a drink of grape, or a lucky penny, etc., and the co-operating merchants help.

- 51. Boy Hunt.—A similar stunt is the point-to-point race, confined to boys under a certain age. Each boy is provided in front of the theatre with a back sign, and the crowd is lined up. In addition to the sign, each boy has a baggage tag printed with as many numbers as there are points, and with such house matter as may be appropriate for the picture. When all are set, the boys are directed to go to a certain point. Here they line up to get their cards punched, and are told where to go for the next station. Each in turn is visited, and the first boy to arrive at the theatre with his card properly punched is declared the winner. A distinctive punch should be used to guard against illegal punches.
- 52. Titles.—Another idea on much the same lines can be used to put over a set of titles. From six to ten store keepers are enlisted in this stunt, and slips are prepared with these stores and addresses and a blank line underneath. The text explains that promptly at a named hour, each window will display the title and play date of an early release. The contestants must go from window to window, copying down the data displayed in each. The first one to present a complete and correct list is the winner, but the title must be correctly spelled in every letter and the dates must be exact. In each store a special card is provided, lettered with one title and date. Promptly at the hour named the heavy cloth masking the sign is whipped off, and the information is revealed. It will help if the sign is placed several days in advance, and a sign inserted announcing the contest and offering entry blanks. The windows do not have to be visited in any given order, but each entry must be under the proper store. To heighten the interest. the stores should not be listed in their proper order, but jumbled as much as possible.
- 53. Traffic Card.—Effective police co-operation is to print new traffic regulations on a card carrying your institutional advertising. The police will hand these out to automobilists and give you a free and very impressive distribution. This can

be done only where there has been a recent change in the rules, but it will not hurt to mail a similar card to those who purchase cars from any local dealer, or supply the dealers with these cards for distribution.

- 54. Wagons.—A simple form of perambulator is to plaster the sides of delivery wagons. Sometimes, a small charge will be made, but often only passes will be required. It is always easy to get the fleets of large concerns with special hook-ups, but the grocer and the hardware man can supply you a permanent peramubator at small cost.
- 55. Auto Contest.—Two special automobile stunts that have been worked with mutual profit are the non-stop tour and the mileage stunt. In the former the demonstration is a stock car with sealed chassis that is supposed to tour the city for a day or a week. Any person who can catch the car with its engine stopped, can obtain a pass from the driver. As the car is plastered with signs for the auto and your attractions, the car will obtain a lot of attention.
- 56. Gasoline Contests.—For the second stunt, a known quantity of gasoline is poured into the tank, and contestants are required to estimate the exact mileage the gasoline will carry the car, figuring on the tables of past performances supplied by the automobile agency. The car is run continuously and should do an approximate number of miles, but you are required to figure in traffic stops and similar factors, which removes the idea from a guessing contest to a matter of common sense.
- 57. Posting.—The alert advertiser will be on the lookout for especially desirable places for posting. The windows of a newly vacated store, the framework of a steel building, the site of a recent large fire and similar spots are all highly desirable, and more than once a manager has had a banner ready before the firemen have put out a blaze.
- 58. Painted Sign.—Another excellent activity is the sectional painted sign. A surface visible from the main thoroughfare is selected, given a ground work and a few letters painted in, here and there. Others are added, a few a day, until the

sign is completed, the idea being to balk curiosity as long as possible. If the sign is painted by women, so much the more interesting. If your surface is sufficiently high up, it does not matter if the bloomered person wears a blonde wig, and chews tobacco.

- 59. Undated Poster.—Even an undated poster will arouse a lot of curiosity. This should be a 3-sheet or 24-sheet in a location not regularly used by your own or any other theatre. Just the poster is put up, with no date strip or house sign. Because there is no information available, a surprisingly large number of persons will become vitally interested. Give evasive replies to any inquiries, and do not date the sheet until you are ready with your other advertising.
- 60. Human Perambulator.—There is no limit to the varieties of the human perambulators. One very simple stunt is to put out a man in correct evening dress with a lettered shirt front. At places where waiters' supplies are sold you can obtain a celluloid false front or a "dickey" which can be lettered without damage. This works best on society titles, but in a pinch it can be used for almost anything.
- 61. Sandwich Men.—The animated book enjoys recurrent popularity. This is a light wooden frame covered with muslin or compo board. It is painted to resemble a book and may either be low enough to let the walker within protrude his head from an opening in the top, or may completely cover the person, who looks through a piece of scrim set into the back of the book at about the height of his face.
- 62. Novelty Boards.—If your property man is skillful, he may create a wine bottle, a walking glass, a loaf of bread, or anything related to the title. He may even construct a battleship or submarine to be worn over the shoulders of a man. If you are familiar with the old basket horses sometimes used on the stage, you have the idea. A ship up to twelve feet long can be made light enough to be carried by one man.
- 63. On the Car.—Similar structures, on a larger scale, can be dropped over a sidecar or a stripped Ford chassis.

- 64. Pole Wagon.—A very convenient perambulator consists of a pair of buggy or sulky wheels with a single pole at the centre of the axle. A banner from eight to ten feet long is placed along the pole so two-thirds of the weight is in front of the axle. The front of the pole is fastened to a motorcycle saddle or side car. If the perambulator is regularly used, a ring can be permanently fastened to the saddle and a snap ring used on the end of the pole, which will make hitching or unhitching a matter of a moment.
- 65. Doubles.—Perambulators, working singly or in pairs, have an infinity of uses. A man in some strange dress hurries down the street with a pack of cards under his arm, each carrying a single letter. He drops these on the sidewalk and starts feverishly to sort them. When he has attracted a sufficiently large crowd, he rapidly spreads them out to announce a picture, gathers them up and repeats the stunt further along.
- 66. Street Argument.—Two men can meet on the street and engage in a rough and tumble fight. When they are in a clinch, a small boy unfolds a banner telling the crowd that they should see the wonderful fight in a named picture.
- 67. Dice.—A man may juggle a pair of oversize dice on the sidewalk until he gets his audience, then remove his coat and expose a banner sewn to the back of his vest, or he may offer a pass to anyone who can throw seven. If the spots on the dice are all ones, twos or threes, this is manifestly impossible, but more than one man will not notice the absence of the higher number until he has made several casts.
- 68. Kisses.—Kiss titles have been put over by girls who approach men, preferably walking with women, and asking, "May I give you a kiss?" Before her victim can protest she offers a candy kiss and passes on. Sometimes this has gone over for a "clean-up" and sometimes it has been a distressing failure that has hurt the house. In this and similar stunts you must know the temper of your town. Even then it is better to play safe.
- 69. Lost Tickets.—An eccentric man frantically hunting through his pockets and moaning, "I can't find it! I can't find

it!" is almost certain to attract a crowd. When the crowd gets large enough, he brightens up, exclaims, "Here it is," and draws a document from his pocket. As he reads one side, the crowd gets the theatre message on the other. This should be on tracing cloth so that it will fold compactly, and leave no suspicious bulge.

- 70. Street Artist.—An artist trying to sketch a scene on a busy street will draw a crowd. When he gets a sufficient audience, he tears the sheet off his sketch block to reveal a second sheet carrying the theatre's message.
- 71. **Deaf Man.**—A stunt that stops traffic is a man with an ear trumpet listening to a friend telling about the great picture to be seen at your theatre. If the men are good actors, it does not in the least suggest an advertising stunt, and it can be worked repeatedly, especially in trolley cars.
- 72. Trolley Card.—In towns where sandwich signs are not permitted to be perambulated, there is nothing to prevent the manager from giving a boy a framed one-sheet to rest or park himself on a bench with the painting outward. The police cannot object to this. The same stunt can be worked in public conveyances. A trolley fare will give wide circulation to the theatre announcement.
- 73. Lost Keys.—Good street work is the lost-key stunt. Any locksmith will sell you a handful of old keys which can be dropped along the main street. Then advertise that you have lost the key to the treasure chest in the lobby and offer the contents to the person who returns the key. All of the key finders, and a lot of others, will pack your lobby.
- 47. Love Letter.—A similar throwaway is a love letter with a wedding ring. This is apparently dropped by accident. They should not be dropped too close together. The finder has to read the letter before he discovers that it is a theatre advertisement. Various keep-sakes, appropriate to the current title, can be similarly lost in the busy section.
- 75. A Rainy Day.—The weather does not altogether limit street activities. On a rainy day a man in oilskins, rubber

boots, carrying a large colored umbrella, can parade the streets. The oilskin and the umbrella will be suitably lettered with program, theatre name and play-date.

- 76. Donkey.—A balky donkey with a display blanket can be led around town by a character appropriately garbed to advertise comedy program.
- 77. Artist.—A girl costumed as a French artist can set her easel and stool where her work will attract a crowd, and then can do a one-sheet or a lobby panel, advertising production, theatre name and play-date. Your artist need not be skilled. The one-sheet or the 24-sheet can be doctored with white so that the main message is evident, and the artist's work will then be only a finishing up with colors. This is most suitable for productions with art-quarter locale.
- 78. Dirt Banks.—Even more striking than a well-placed 24-sheet is a dirt bank near the street which has been properly scraped and white-washed with theatre name, program and play-date. Obviously, the necessary permission must be secured. The novelty of this display gets it more attention.
- 79. Egg-Rolling Contest.—At Easter time an egg-rolling contest can be held at the local parks for children of the city. The theatre will supply the passes for the prizes. Obviously, announcements for the theatre's Easter program should be prominently displayed.
- 80. Drop Cards.—A series of cards can be arranged, each carrying a letter of the name of the star or a letter of the title of the photoplay. These are distributed with a prize for those who get a complete set, spelling out the name of the star or the title. Obviously, a very limited number of cards carrying one of the letters will be distributed. The unique value of this throw-away is that the cards will be traded around and so gain circulation.
- 81. Lake and River.—If there is a regatta or swimming contest, or if water sports gather a crowd, a theatre float should be displayed.

Conclusion.

Relatively few of many different outdoor activities have been indicated here. The only purpose is to indicate what might be done. The title or the theme of many a production will suggest some new activity or some variation of a familiar activity.

One thing should always be kept in mind. Good taste should not be violated even if you are appealing to a "sporty" crowd. You may be advertising for them, but not exclusively to them. All the others who see a sales activity in poor taste will get an opinion of your theatre which will not encourage attendance. Therefore, avoid such things as men in underwear walking around in barrels, and over-bold women—and similarly offensive activities which, sad to say, have been tried.

It may seem very effective to have your perambulator slap a stranger on the back with, "I say, old chap, there's a wonderful picture at the Gem Theatre this week." It would have been much better to have asked politely where the Gem Theatre is, and add in explanation, "Everyone says there is an exceptionally fine program there this week. Have you seen it?"

Be familiar with local ordinances, and if you have any doubt concerning a particular activity, obtain police approval in advance.

Outdoor activities supplement other advertising of the theatres. It is evident that they are not advocated as exclusive sales-promotion activities.

Wherever a crowd is gathered, either at a parade or at an athletic meet or at a busy corner, it is there that the outdoor message should be circulated. As with any other advertising, circulation is an important consideration. Evidently, the greater number of prospects who are reached, the better. Circulation of a message to those who are not possible prospects is not effective. Outdoor activities require that the manager be alert to notice current events that will attract crowds. Secondly, that he reach the crowd with a message that will be timely, appropriate, and an attention-winner.

CHAPTER XIX

DISTRIBUTED MATTER

MOST production companies supply managers with a standard herald for use as distributed matter. For many releases there are also available four-page rotogravure sheets. Now and then the heralds may be cut to some special shape suggested by the title or shaped to suggest a book when the feature has been based on a popular work of fiction. But generally the heralds are small issues, printed in two or more colors with a more or less generous space for the imprint of the theatre's own advertising. Small houses, unable to afford printing bills, can rubber stamp in the theatre name and playdates, or imprint with a duplicator on the imprint space.

Some exhibitors even use the duplicator for the production of home-made heralds in small quantities, though not more than one hundred good copies may be obtained from one original and a new original is required for each hundred. By using inks of more than one color some very effective combinations may be achieved.

Managers in the moderately small towns use their newspaper displays for heralds. The type is lifted from the newspaper forms, moved over to a job press and run off on white or colored news stock. This saves the cost of composition, but has the disadvantage of not offering a change in the appeal.

In some towns where there is a large foreign population it is customary to use two sets of heralds, the second in the language of the foreign colony. In some instances, a dignity herald is used for circulation in the better class of homes, while a flash throwaway is printed for the milltown district.

Standard Heralds.

None of the home-made heralds are as attractive as the standard heralds, which are produced in such quantities that the cost to the theatre is but slightly more than that charged for the locally produced job, and sometimes is even less.

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Except for the smallest towns where pennies must be saved at the cost of inferior quality, the home-made herald is not advisable because it does not carry the conviction of the well printed, brilliantly illustrated standard herald.

The locally-prepared herald is serviceable to meet some special condition. It is also useful where there is no time to obtain regular heralds from the exchange. A two- or three-column cut has been worked into a very presentable throwaway where it has not been possible to obtain supplies from the exchange.

Novelties.—In addition to the straight heralds there are innumerable special novelties that can be used. One well-known form is to print announcements on neat pages of wall paper with a top line reading, "We have scraped the paper from the walls to increase the capacity for" Rolls of paper will not handle very well unless the curvature is pressed out, but all decorators have sample books that have been superseded by newer issues and these can be cut up very nicely. Generally the owner is glad to give them to the theatre in return for a pass. This is suggested, of course, for smaller theatres.

Sometimes the material used in announcements will suggest the title of the picture; wood veneer, such as is used for the manufacture of peach baskets, birchbark, cloth, oilcloth and even metal may be used.

Handkerchiefs.—More than one picture has been pushed to success through the limited distribution of cheap handkerchiefs with pasted or printed announcements. For drama, the suggestion is that the powerful story will "move you to tears," while for a comedy "you will laugh until you cry."

Tags.—Baggage tags to which novelties are attached form the basis of many novel throwaways. With a vest button tied into the string the announcement on the card says that the button is for replacement when you laugh a button off at the comedy.

Keys.—A key can be affixed for a number of ideas. Wedding rings, cast metal novelties and similar articles can all be used to give point to the appeal on the card. These will achieve a much wider distribution than a straight herald which

is read by one person and thrown down. Few will throw away a tag with a novelty attached. It will be shown to friends. The same applies to advertising pieces which are out of the ordinary. They will be passed along because of their novelty.

Invitations.—Included in this category of novel throwaways are such things as the imitation summons in connection with legal or murder stories (distinct from the automobile summons, which is not favored), marriage licenses or wedding announcements (naming the hero and heroine of the advertised story) and a wide variety of invitations. For the last named where an address is necessary, the street number of the theatre should be used. Few persons think of a theatre by the street number, and many will come to see what "964 Main Street" is, when a novel mystery announcement is distributed.

Licenses.—Somewhat similar is the membership certificate in some mythical club, and blanks similar to the familiar "Liar's License." All of these may be counted upon to have a circulation value of from ten to fifty readers for each piece, according to the acquaintances of the recipient.

Money.—Money advertisements are good, if not used too often. Some popular forms carry a penny pasted to the announcement card with the suggestion that the coin be used toward the purchase of a seat to some special performance.

Checks.—Bank checks for one cent are also popular, but the bank generally requires that a time limit be given on the check. Not many of them will be cashed, but the fact that they can be cashed carries an appeal of novelty. Another form is an imitation check promising a thousand thrills or laughs as may be most appropriate. Small checks are sometimes mailed with a letter stating "This is the recipient's share of Brewster's Millions" or 'The Miser's Hoard, etc."

Candy.—The candy known as "Life Savers" has been used for innumerable photoplays, mostly nautical. It is either tied to a cord or enclosed in an envelope. Generally the company will supply the candies if an agent can be reached.

Capsules.—Advertisements printed on very thin paper can be compactly rolled and enclosed in capsules such as are used for medicines. The complement to this is the physician's prescription blank on which the star prescribes laughter or thrills, as may be pertinent to the photoplay.

Tickets.—Imitation railroad tickets and time tables are favorites, particularly for railroad plays.

Cards.—Useful as well as interesting are stage and interurban schedule cards printed also with institutional advertising for the theatre. The same style of card may be used for fire alarm signals or similar local information.

Wrappers.—A clever novelty is the imitation roulade of coins, generally dimes. Coin wrappers can be supplied by the bank and printed on the inside. These are wrapped around two-inch lengths of 3/4-inch dowels so that the "\$5 in dimes" shows. These are dropped on the streets and left on store counters and hotel desks. Most shopkeepers will take a supply and renew those picked up by the curious.

Kiss Cards.—Cards bearing the printed imprint of a mouth, printed in red, may be a kiss from a woman star, and will be greatly improved if there is a blank space on which the recipient may imprint the form of her own lips, generously painted with lipstick. A prize may be given for the nearest approach to the original. This form of contest card is also good for thumb printing. Instructions for making the impression should appear on the card in small type.

Sheets.—Racing plays can be put over with imitations of the familiar tipster sheets. This is particularly useful in localities where there is a race meeting, but often it will go over without this aid.

Policies.—Policies insuring the holder against the effects of laughter or emotion while witnessing a named play have been very useful and can be distributed through arrangement with a local insurance company.

Ballots.— "Sample Ballots" are useful around election time. Many other local "excitements" can be tied-into with a hand-bill of some sort.

Standard Novelties.—Novelty hats, masks, eyeglasses, monocles, miniature playing cards and similar articles are often supplied by producers for special photoplays. Consult the chapter. "Advertising Materials."

Conclusion.

Of course, novelty "throwaways" which are prepared by an individual theatre should not be used so often that the novelty wears off or they become a pest. Their value lies in the fact that the cleverness of the novelty helps to create the impression that the feature advertised must also be clever.

For methods of distribution consult the chapters "Using the Mails," "Advertising Materials" and "Co-operative Advertising."

Do not permit the streets to become littered with handbills. This reflects unfavorably on the theatre. If local ordinances regulate the distribution of such material, follow the regulation. If material is left in letter boxes or on doorsteps, be sure that your "messengers" cause no offense which will reflect unfavorably on the theatre. It is precautions such as these which must be carefully followed. Because locally prepared distributed material is seldom of a quality equal to the standard heralds and novelties supplied by producer-distributors that the latter are favored for distributed material.

CHAPTER XX

CO-OPERATIVE ADVERTISING

THE motion picture theatre, by allying itself on a co-operative advertising basis with merchants, schools, societies, clubs and newspapers, can get a more complete circulation of its advertising message at less cost than would be otherwise possible.

Co-operative advertising has been used more extensively by the motion picture industry than by any other. Theatre managers are mainly responsible for the continuance and the development of this beneficial practice because co-operative advertising requires individual handling and adaptation to local conditions.

Considering the benefits which the theatre can offer to the co-operating parties, the fullest possibilities of co-operative advertising have not as yet been secured. This can be traced either to neglect, or to a failure to realize the possibilities that exist.

In some cases co-operative advertising is not secured because the matter is not presented convincingly.

Mutual Advantages.

Co-operative advertising to be completely successful should offer mutual advantages for each of the co-operating parties. It is not good business for the manager to arrange a campaign of co-operative advertising which will benefit only the theatre. By misrepresentation and exaggeration, the other co-operating party might be persuaded to contribute effort and money. But after the co-operative advertising campaign has been executed, if the benefits were negligible, it is not likely that another plan would be accepted. Thus one possibility is permanently lost to the theatre. Besides, there is developed ill-feeling and a natural grievance. Those who have failed to benefit by co-operating with the theatre, criticize its methods. The circulation of this criticism influences

others, and eventually it is impossible for the theatre manager to complete any arrangements for co-operative advertising. Therefore the manager should strive as hard to protect the interests of those who co-operate as he does to protect the interest of the theatre. A selfish attitude will in the long run bring failure.

Every time co-operative advertising with the theatre benefits others, it becomes that much easier to complete further co-operative advertising campaigns. Merchants who have benefited circulate reports of the advantages to be derived by co-operative advertising with the theatre. Thus, many new prospects are developed. In communities where managers have handled this matter properly, it is a common thing for merchants and others to take the initiative in suggesting co-operative advertising campaigns. They have come to believe that the theatre is rendering them a business service. Therefore it cannot be emphasized too strongly that in every co-operative advertising campaign the advantages should be mutual.

Good Will.

Not only does the effective co-operative campaign give a more complete circulation of the theatre's advertising message at less cost than would be otherwise possible, but it promotes the prestige and reputation of the theatre. Merchants, newspaper men, clubs and societies who have benefited by co-operating with the theatre, become supporters of the theatre. They discuss its value to the community because they selfishly realize it has a value for them. The theatre is considered not a business competitor but an ally whose welfare they are anxious to promote. This moral support of the theatre as an institution whose activities benefit other institutions of the community has a real value.

Service.

In presenting a co-operative advertising plan to others, the manager should realize that he has something to offer which will be mutually helpful. He is rendering a service. He is not begging for favors. He is not requesting something for nothing. He has a business proposition. Mere friendship should never be the only basis on which the manager builds his case. The approach of the manager who acts as though he were asking for charity in presenting a co-operative advertising plan is often the cause of his failure to convince.

Passes.

Another reason why co-operative advertising often has not been successful is the emphasis placed by the theatre manager on theatre passes. It is not good business to make theatre passes the outstanding consideration. It is not feasible to create the impression that the theatre is paying with passes for what the other co-operating party contributes. If the assistance of the other co-operating party is at all valuable, this real value cannot be paid for in the number of passes that could be reasonably offered. Consequently, if passes are considered as the main return which the theatre has to offer the bargain does not seem fair. The actual value of the passes is compared with the effort and expense involved, and the comparison does not satisfy. Besides, the effort and expense of the other co-operating party will be limited if measured by the value of the theatre passes involved, and thus the theatre does not get the full measure of co-operation.

Another striking disadvantage of centering attention on theatre passes to convince others to co-operate with the theatre is that when theatre passes are liberally scattered an impression is created that the theatre seat is not worth the admission price charged. The manager who is careless in the distribution of theatre passes cheapens the commodity which he sells, just as any merchant who liberally distributed his products would create the impression that their price was not a true indication of their value.

Co-operative advertising is a business proposition. The distribution of theatre passes should have as small a part in such transactions as is possible. If a few passes are given, let them be given more as a token of friendship and personal regard rather than as the theatre's payment for the expense and effort expended by others.

Prizes.—If theatre passes are used as prizes for a contest conducted in connection with the co-operative advertising campaign, then the pass takes on a new value because it is a prize with the added value that comes from the pride of winning. The pass as a prize to the winner of a contest is a different matter than the pass as payment to the business man for co-operative advertising activity on a strictly business basis.

Advantages.

The main consideration which the theatre manager should set before a possible co-operator is the advantage of tying-in with a subject of widespread interest and exceptional timeliness. Photoplays and photoplay personalities have a widespread popularity which the manager can actually prove by figures of theatre attendance. The figures of the circulation of the fan magazines is another convincing argument. It can be shown that advertisers in fan magazines pay heavy advertising rates—as much as \$1,200 per page—to be represented on pages which discuss the very subjects with which the manager is asking local merchants to tie-in the announcements of their products. The timeliness of the subject with which the manager is asking co-operative parties to ally their advertising is proved by the word-of-mouth comment which attends the announcement of the showing of a photoplay.

It cannot be denied that photoplays develop intense public interest. The displays of window cards, stills, cut-outs, and other advertising material wins an interest for a merchant's product which would not be possible otherwise.

When heralds, rotos and miniatures are distributed with a merchant's product and tied-in with advertising announcements of the merchant's, those announcements share the intense interest developed by the motion picture material.

The merchant's product is so familiar that it needs some outside influence to attract new attention. It needs something that is glamorous, something that is timely, something that is novel. It needs something to give it a human interest.

The public is interested in photoplay personalities. It is interested in what the stars wear, how they live, what they eat, etc. Consequently, when decorative motion picture advertising

material ties in with the product of the merchant, an interest is given to that product which it otherwise would not have. Because the public is so interested in motion picture entertainment, any announcement of new productions, and especially art and photographic reproductions of high-lights of new photoplays, attracts attention.

This is the trend of argument which should be followed by the theatre manager. He is rendering a service. Co-operative advertising with the theatre can bring attention to the product or the institution which could not be otherwise secured.

Endorsements.

Recently national conventions of advertising managers have gone on record as endorsing the effectiveness of co-operative advertising with motion picture theatres. Consequently, there usually exists not a detrimental prejudice, but rather a willingness to benefit from what the theatre has to offer if it is properly presented.

Sales.

The manager should never overlook the important fact that the merchant's main interest in considering co-operative advertising is its power to help sales of his products—either immediate sales or sales that come from establishing good-will for his institution. Whether or not co-operative advertising with the theatre helps primarily to immediate sales, or primarily to establish the reputation of the institution as an up-to-date enterprising establishment, need not be discussed. It is not advisable for the manager to stress the immediate sales that will result from co-operative advertising with the theatre. The merchant can check up immediate sales. He may then limit his consideration of the value of the co-operative advertising to immediate sales, and not see enough to justify further co-operation with the theatre.

Some phases of co-operative advertising increase considerably the *immediate* sales. Some do not. But an advantage which should always be emphasized is that co-operation with the theatre gives the establishment a tone of enterprise and of up-to-the-minute activity which reflects credit. The

dollars and cents value of this cannot be noted immediately. Therefore, it is not good business for the manager to make any exaggerated statement or any guarantee of exceptional increase in *immediate* sales.

Follow-up.

Where theatre managers have handled co-operative advertising effectively, they do not find it difficult to complete future arrangements. In fact, merchants admit that their share of the bargain was satisfactory and will often request and suggest new campaigns.

Objections.

Merchants who have had no experience with co-operative advertising, present arguments with which the manager should familiarize himself. For instance, the merchant might argue that his enterprise does not get a penny of the money spent by the public on entertainment. Why should he co-operate? The more money the public spends on amusement the less they will have to spend for his product. In this case the merchant is considering only the benefits to the theatre and overlooking possible profits for his establishment. He must be shown the advantages that exist for him, and these advantages must be given in detail so that he will see that they outbalance the effort and expense which he contributes.

The merchant might argue that if he enters a co-operative advertising campaign, public attention will center on ideas that have no bearing on his product. Of course, if there is only a far-fetched relation between his product and the particular subject advertised by the theatre, it will be hard to convince the merchant. But many subjects have in the title or the star or the theme or situations of the photoplay, a direct bearing on products of merchants. In approaching merchants who have had no previous experience with co-operative advertising, it is advisable to present at first only a plan in which the theatre's subject of advertising has a very direct relation to the product of the merchant.

Merchants sometimes argue that if a theatre will not advertise for him from its stage, then he should not advertise for the theatre with his store window and in other ways. This reasoning is faulty. The theatre does not advertise from its stage or on its screen for the merchant because such advertising has no benefit to the theatre. But when the merchant uses motion picture theatre material in his window, that material gets attention for the window in which his products are displayed. There is a distinct benefit for the merchant. He is then getting something that he otherwise would not get. An attractive window display of motion picture material will soon convince the doubting merchant. It is just as easy to convince him that the theatre has nothing to gain by using its stage or screen for the merchant.

Merchants might argue that merchants themselves do not join co-operative advertising campaigns with other merchants, and that the theatre should not be an exception. The reason why merchants do not co-operate with each other in advertising plans is because one merchant's product has nothing glamorous or exciting or appealing which will win attention for the product of the other merchant. The subject offered by the motion picture theatre has in it appeal, interest, timeliness, and novelty which is lacking in the product of merchants.

Merchants might argue that the theatre manager is seeking "something for nothing." They do not realize that the theatre is spending money to advertise a subject in other ways than by the co-operative campaign which is being discussed. Therefore, it is well for the manager to explain that the theatre's advertising expense includes newspaper advertising, billboards, lobby display, purchase of accessories and other advertising charges. Thus, the theatre is spending considerable money to develop local interest in the subject which will be the basis of the co-operative advertising campaign. This expenditure has not been shared by the merchant, and yet will act to his advantage, inasmuch as further interest has been developed, and the co-operative advertising campaign will thus be more effective for the merchant.

National Plans.

Some co-operative advertising is occasionally arranged on a national basis. The producer-distributor arranges with the central office of the manufacturer, so that local dealers and retailers throughout the country are supplied with material. Thus the national manufacturer meets the expense of preparing advertising material such as broadsides, counter-cards, mats, heralds, bulletins, window display material, etc. In many cases these national tie-ups have proved the opening wedge for a theatre manager to secure local tie-ups.

The local dealer is more impressed when he receives material and endorsement from the central office of the manufacturer whose products he handles. He knows then that the national manufacturer is convinced of the value of co-operative advertising. The fact that the initiative is taken by the manufacturer of his product puts him in a more receptive frame of mind.

It remains for the local theatre manager to be familiar with these nationally arranged tie-ups, and to visit local dealers on time to arrange details. In some cases all that the manager has to do is to acquaint the local dealer with theatre name and play date and perhaps work out a few details of some contest.

Nevertheless, because of neglect, some communities have had no representation in these national co-operative campaigns. The manager should be alert to use such national tie-ups in appealing to those merchants who hitherto have been unwilling to take a part in co-operative advertising.

Window Displays.

Photoplay advertising material displayed in the windows of merchants is the most general application of co-operative advertising. In approaching merchants for window space, the manager is more likely to succeed if he is familiar with principles of window display and understands the problems of the individual merchant.

To-day, window display is a well-developed science. Retail merchants generally believe that the show window is the most valuable part of the store.

Each year hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent to make window displays effective. The rental charge for window space alone in some establishments totals close to a half million dollars a year. If store space is divided into five units and these five units are pro-rated to the 100% rental, it is found that the window which is only 10% of the space, costs 25% of the rental. This is mentioned so that the manager will realize that the merchant considers every inch of window space valuable.

The manager of one of the largest general store organizations in the country stated: "The window is from four times to ten times as valuable as the counter display because the counter display can sell only to those who are already within the store, while the window can reach the great crowd outside."

The merchant does his utmost to make the window bring returns on the large rental invested. He uses his window for two purposes—first, to make immediate sales, and secondly, to increase the prestige of his establishment.

The theatre manager has something to offer which will further both purposes, and the wide-awake merchant is quick to see its value to him.

Attention.

A merchant can be readily convinced that the display of motion picture material will get attention for his window. The choice of the material that will be offered by the manager depends on the nature of the products handled by the store. The more closely the subject of the theatre's advertising material can be related to the merchant's product the better. The merchant has the same product to display year in and year out. He strives to give his display action and interest. The manager is bringing him the very element needed-drama and personality. Every window is a stage and the principles of stage design apply in window display. The still, the cut-out, the herald, the roto, the attractive window-card-all win attention for the merchant's window, and that attention is then directed to the merchant's product. In other words, the theatre manager is offering attention-winning devices. Window display experts are highly paid to render the very service which the theatre's display material gives. This material is given gratis.

The manager can offer another service by mastering certain principles of window display; can make suggestions that will be helpful, especially to merchants who have not the assistance of window display experts. The manager has gelatins for color effects. He might loan a baby spotlight from his stage equipment to be used in a merchant's window. As far as dressing is concerned, the window is like a miniature stage where many principles of stage setting can be applied. The manager knows color harmonies and the possible uses of the different types of lighting. Therefore he can be of assistance to the merchant.

Principles.

It is for this reason that the following well-known principles of window display are suggested:

- Absolute cleanliness is essential—the glass must be spotless—there should be no dust—no faded or worn materials should be shown.
- Arrange details in such a way as to direct the eye to a central point.
- 3. If possible, have the movement of the display bring the prospect toward the entrance of the store rather than away from it.
- 4. If you can suggest the use of the product or put it in action, this is more effective than the mere display of the product.
- 5. The display of one article at a time seems most effective. The display of a few articles of one kind or of related articles creates the quality impression.
- 6. The miscellaneous assortment of many different articles causes confusion and a hazy impression.
- 7. Make the display timely and seasonable.
- 8. Goods should be shown on different levels and not all on one plane.
- 9. No goods should interfere with the view of other goods on display.
- 10. Frequent change is advisable where the same prospects are regularly passing the same window.
- Light colored goods against a dark background or dark colored goods against a light background are most effective.
- 12. Contrasts are more forceful than harmonies.

- 13. Because 80% of the people buy as a result of visual impression rather than reasoned appeal, the actual physical appearance of the article itself is better than any statement of its qualities.
- 14. It takes about six seconds to pass the store, or about ten steps, therefore make your display simple and try to have an uninterrupted idea which all the elements combine to create.
- 15. Suit your display to the type of prospects who are in the majority of potential customers passing your window—make your appeal feminine if the majority of prospects are women.
- 16. Color, form, light and motion are the four tools with which you work.
- 17. Dramatize your window. Dramatization does not mean a startling trick or stunt to gain attention, but rather dramatic presentation with dramatic activity and movement. The ideal thing is to bring the prospect into the picture while making him a participant of the action instead of a by-stander.
- 18. Increase in illumination adds to attention value.

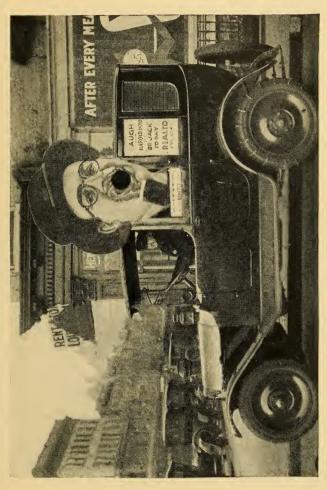
Importance.

The importance which the merchant generally attaches to the window display is evident from the returns on a questionnaire distributed nationally to six types of retail merchants asking that preference be indicated for the following forms of advertising—window display, newspapers, billboards, magazines. The retailers indicated their preference for window display as follows:

Grocery retailers51%	preferred	window	display
Hardware retailers75%	**	4.6	••
Drug retailers52%	**	4.6	44
Haberdashery retailers 64%	4.6	6.6	4.4
Confectionery retailers38%	44	44	••
Dry goods retailers68%	4.6	••	••

Use of Material.

A nation-wide survey has shown that merchants do not use window display material supplied by manufacturers for the following reasons—and these reasons as possible objec-



ONE OF THE TIME-TRIED STUNTS FOR A COMEDY

The open mouth of the cutout is backed by the horn of a phonograph playing the well-known "laughing" record.



tions should be considered by the theatre manager requesting window space for his advertising material:

- 1. It would not increase the store's prestige.
- 2. It was not suitable for the space available.
- 3. It did not promise sales to justify the amount of space required.
- 4. It was not seasonal.
- 5. It was not distinctive enough.
- 6. It was too hard to put together.
- 7. It would appeal only to a small percentage of the dealer's customers.
- 8. It would promote the sale only of an article which offered small profit.
- 9. It was too cheap looking.
- It was too gaudy for the character of the store.
- 11. It arrived too late for a tie-up that would prove beneficial to the merchant.

Selection.

In selecting the store windows where motion picture advertising material can be displayed the following should be considered:

- Circulation in the neighborhood where prospective theatre patrons are in the greatest number.
- 2. The prominence that will be given to the motion picture material.
- 3. The quality appearance of the window.
- 4. The general attention value of the window.
- 5. Its appeal to women shoppers.
- 6. How close the product and policy of the store are to the appeal of entertainment.
- The close relation of illustrated material in theatre advertising to the products in the window.

The following windows, because of their appeal, are particularly suited to the display of motion picture advertising—beauty parlors, candy stores, jewelry stores, drug stores, shoe stores, music stores, ladies' furnishing stores, florists.

With almost every feature photoplay, some item of advertising material is furnished which would be suitable for display in the stores mentioned.

Theatre Play-Date.

The manager should regularly pay particular attention to the proper display of theater name and play-date. Unless these two are impressed in the minds of those who see the display, its value to the theatre is negligible. Do not hide away at the bottom of your advertising material theatre name and play-date where it will be covered or shadowed by surrounding objects. Let your corner card or lettering be neat. In many instances, the merchant has refused to place the theatre's advertising material because theatre name and play date were so carelessly lettered that the display was spoiled. Be sure that your name and date card are securely fastened to the display. If they are loosened and shake off before reaching the window, the merchant as a rule will not bother to replace them because he is interested chiefly in the illustration and not in the lettering.

Preparation.

Cardboard or mat board frames for stills, cut-outs, and backgrounds for other advertising material must be prepared locally and this is where the manager can exercise ingenuity and originality. If this frame is prepared so that it will harmonize with the background and general decorative effect of the window, it is more likely that the display will be placed. Do not expect the merchant to frame and back your material.

Permanent Position.—The ideal arrangement is a permanent position in the window for the theatre's advertising. A decorative frame prepared at the suggestion of the merchant so that it harmonizes with his window furnishings can be used regularly with replacement space for play date and illustrated material.

Lighting.—Many store windows are ineffectively lighted. The theatre manager can supply gelatins and give suggestions for lamp dipping, spotlight effects and other lighting suggestions which the merchant will appreciate. Good-will can thus be developed which will serve to the manager's advantage in arranging for window space.

Contests.—If a contest can be arranged for the window display, it becomes doubly effective. For instance, a pair of theatre passes can be the prize offered to the one who estimates most correctly the number of candy kisses in a glass case—the number of beads on the gown worn by a picture star illustrated in the window—the size shoe worn by a star the number of stitches in a costume—the length of the silk thread used in a pair of hoisery—how long it will take for a keg of water dripping in the window to empty-how long it will take for a cake of ice to melt, etc. If the contest requires that contestants enter the store and leave their estimate with one of the employees, the merchant realizes that the window display has actually brought possible customers into the store who otherwise would not have entered. If the contest in the window is closely related to the theme or to the title or to a situation in the photoplay, the display becomes that much more effective for the theatre.

Miniature displays and animated displays which were discussed for the lobby (consult pages 191 and 192) can be adapted for window display. It is evident that the window display with movement is more effective.

Further interest can be won for the window by displaying relics, or trophies or medals loaned by the local museums or the American Legion or the local college.

Certain possibilities of co-operative advertising as arranged between the theatre and others where the plan has individual details not generally applicable are discussed in the following:

1. Book Stores.

About twenty years ago the popular stage play, "Quincy Adams Sawyer," and the novel were jointly advertised with the phrase—"Read the book and see the play." Since then co-operative advertising between publishers and book sellers on the one hand and producers on the other has been common. It was successful in advertising the stage plays, "The Garden of Allah," "The Lion and the Mouse," "Within the Law." The photoplay and the novel, "The Mill of the Gods," suggested first attempts at advertising photoplays in co-operation with publishers and book stores. Nowadays so many photoplays

are made from popular novels that this form of co-operative advertising has become very extensive. In some cases, a photoplay edition of the novel is prepared, and in some cases a novel is written after the photoplay is in production, even when the photoplay was not based on any novel or story.

Photoplay Editions.—If a photoplay edition is prepared, the publishers usually supply display material. It then depends upon local theatre managers to arrange that local book sellers secure this material and include theatre name and play date in their displays.

Many opportunities for effective displays are lost because the theatre manager did not bring the matter to the attention of local book stores far enough in advance of play date for them to complete arrangements. Book stores usually have not on hand a sufficient number of books to build a display. Even jackets and wrappers are often not available locally. Therefore, it is important that the book store management be given as much advance notice as possible. The theatre manager by studying his bookings can select those photoplays that have been made from novels, and then visit the different book stores far in advance of play date and make known the fact that photoplays from novels which can be purchased at the book stores will be shown at the theatre.

It cannot be expected that one book store will arrange co-operative advertising campaigns for all the photoplays on the manager's list. However, the manager has department stores, large book sellers, drug stores, smaller book stores and private circulating library counters as so many centers where he can distribute his co-operative advertising plans. January, February and March are the months during which the management of book stores seem most willing to give displays on a co-operative advertising basis.

Department Stores.—In arranging for a window display with department stores, the manager should not make the exaggerated statement that a window display for a novel tying-in with a particular photoplay will bring enough sales of the book to justify the window space to be used. The book display appeals to department store executives because of the dignity and timeliness which it lends to the window,

not because of the sales of the particular novel which might be made at the store. It is useless for the manager to argue to the contrary. In fact, with most photoplay-novel co-operative advertising, the main advantage to the dealer is the impression of the progressiveness created by such timely advertising.

Objections.

Managers should realize that book sales in the store because of the display will not begin until after the picture has opened at the theatre. This will usually be stated most emphatically by the book seller, and should be conceded by the manager. However, the display in advance of play-date is justified by the fact that this develops greater interest in the photoplay and will eventually help book sales.

If the book store has not on hand a sufficient number of copies of a particular novel and cannot secure jackets, a display can be built up with other novels by the same author—or with other novels from which other photoplays have been made—or with other novels about the same theme or the same locale.

Of course, a street window display is of most advantage to the theatre. If this cannot be secured, a show case display or at least a counter display can be requested.

Stills and illustrated advertising material which the theatre supplies are welcomed by the book seller. Cut-outs from posters as background for window displays are particularly favored. Of course, theatre name and play date should be as prominently displayed as possible.

The following statement from the president of one of the leading publishing companies of America is significant: "The motion picture is the most powerful single influence for the extension of the book business that has ever been developed. More than that, I think we are safe in stating that it is the most powerful influence that will be developed during your time and ours. Now the fact remains that if we, as book sellers, will grasp the wonderful opportunities which the motion picture producers have placed before us by selecting books for their photoplays, then spending millions of dollars in advertising them in every city and town in the country, we are bound to get new crowds of patrons into our stores. The book dealer

who sells the books from which the great pictures are made and who lets his townspeople know he sells them, has available the largest source of patronage his community affords—enormous crowds that daily fill the theatres." Notice, this is the opinion, not of a theatre manager, but of a publisher. Remember that many a photoplay is produced from a story because there is a ready-made audience of millions who read the story as a serial in a magazine, in novel form, in newspaper syndicate form and in photoplay novel form.

2. Library Co-operation.

Public libraries have co-operated for displays of novels from which photoplays have been made. These displays include not only copies of the novel, but books of travel, biography, history, fiction and others connected in any way with the period, the theme, or the author of the novel. Library authorities are anxious to increase book loans at the library. They realize that if only one title is promoted and only a few copies of a particular book are on the shelves, the advantage to them will be negligible. Therefore, they are most interested in any co-operative plan which will move a number of books. They realize that a photoplay based on the Colonial period may stimulate interest in historical novels and history books of that particular period. A photoplay based on a novel by a popular author can be used to move a number of his other novels. They appreciate especially any plan which will help to move "non-fiction volumes." Consequently, the manager should do his best to point out all the general advantages to the library from the co-operative plan.

The library authorities should be notified as far in advance of play date as possible so that they can collect material for their display. Stills, posters, cut-out material, book jackets, should be supplied by the manager. Added interest is given to the library display if flags, antiques, trophies, decorations, etc., from museums and historical societies are added to the display.

An outstanding feature of the co-operative campaign with libraries is the distribution of book marks. Usually the expense of printing book marks must be met by the theatre. However, the library authorities will prepare the material to be printed on the book marks and will arrange that the book mark goes into all volumes leaving the library.

In larger cities, the publicity representative of the main office of the library will extend the co-operative plan so that displays are shown at branches, school libraries and station libraries. It depends on the good judgment of the manager to select a photoplay which will appeal to the library authorities who exercise discrimination in selecting photoplays for which they will co-operate. They do not object to mentioning theatre name and play date in their display announcements.

3. Schools.

There are many ways in which schools may be included in the advertising plans of the theatre. Arrange "after-school matinees," which classes will attend in a body when a suitable photoplay is selected as the subject for a class exercise.

Special showings have been given for teachers when the manager feels that the teachers' interest in the photoplay will stimulate attendance among pupils.

Featuring the school orchestra, Glee Club contests, Cheer Leader contests, school dramatic playlets and other school activities on the stages of smaller theatres to promote an interest in appropriate photoplays is suggested.

Poster contests can be arranged with the art supervisor of local schools. These contests are approved because they give the pupils practice in using the training they receive. The contest should be started well in advance of play date if the theatre is to profit. School authorities can be supplied with lobby cards, one-sheets and stills of the photoplay which suggest subjects for the posters to be made by the pupils. These posters can be in crayon, charcoal, paint or crepe paper cutouts. With the latter material the designs are cut from crepe paper and pasted on colored backgrounds. Local stores where crepe paper is sold will supply booklets with detailed instructions for such contests. During the contest announcements of theatre name and play-date can be prominently displayed on the school bulletin board and thus stimulate word-of-mouth comment which will reach the homes.

Newspaper publicity is possible with a contest of this kind. especially if a particular paper is permitted to assume sponsorship of the contest. The best posters made by the pupils can be used for lobby display. Other posters can be used for window tie-ups, and merchants will be inclined to accept this material because they feel that the contest has aroused interest. Local art teachers or a committee of teachers from the different schools can act as judges and the award of the prize take place at the theatre. In smaller communities managers have arranged poster contests as often as ten times during the year. Added interest has been given the contest by having different schools compete against each other. It is evident that a suitable photoplay should be selected. It is evident that the advantages to the theatre from the word-of-mouth advertising and the general interest aroused in the poster contest is a distinct advantage.

Manual training schools can be used for boat-making contests, miniature aeroplane-making contests, clay modeling contests, etc. There might even be a miniature building contest at the manual training school. One theatre manager used the theatre anniversary for such a contest with prizes offered for the best miniature replicas of the theatre front. The sewing classes at schools can be used for doll-dressing contests, hattrimming contests, etc. Classes in interior decoration can be used for contests in which a prize is offered for a miniature replica of a striking set used in the photoplay. It is evident that these contests should be started far enough in advance of play-date to allow a week or two weeks' time for the display of the finished miniatures.

4. Debating Societies.

The directors of school, college and club debating societies welcome any proposition of debate which will be timely and which will not require too much research. In some photoplays the theatre manager has a problem or a theme that can be put in the form of a proposition for debate. Besides, photoplays can be discussed as to merit, treatment, entertainment value, etc. If the subject of debate is based on a photoplay, the attendance of the debating society at the theatre is required

for an intelligent discussion. The advantage to the theatre is evident. Where a debate is to be arranged in advance of play-date, sections of the press sheet can be supplied. In one instance, every fourth subject of debate at a college debating society is based on something that the theatre manager has suggested and helped the director of the debating society to work out.

5. Restaurants.

Paper napkins supplied by the theatre and printed with a message of the production, including theatre name and play date, can be distributed. Thumbnail cuts of stars or directors or one-column cuts can be used as decorations on menus or on the back of dinner checks. Special menus can be arranged. For instance, titles and names from the production give a novelty to the menu-"Tenderfoot Steak," "Vegetable Stampede," "Salad à la Mix," etc. The title "The Vanishing American" was used in restaurant advertising to stimulate interest in what was announced as "The Vanishing American Dinner." Certain dishes or certain drinks can be named after the star or after the title. The restaurant welcomes these novelty touches because restaurant advertising as a rule needs the novelty and the glamour and the interest which can be furnished by tie-ups with motion picture advertising material.

6. Soda Fountains.

Dishes and drinks can be named after a star or after a title. For instance, "The Gilda Gray Shake," "Devil's Temptation Sundae," "The Happy Lovers Combination," etc. Stickers on the soda fountain window or the mirror, with stills and cut-out material help awaken interest.

7. Real Estate Companies.

The opening of a new subdivision offers the opportunity of interesting real estate companies in co-operative advertising for a photoplay with a "home" theme such as "The Enchanted Cottage," "The Home Owner," "The Pride of the Home," etc. Apartment and room-to-rent advertising receives an added

interest when tied-in with a photoplay title that has been widely advertised in the community. Miniature models of homes can be made attractive by still cut-outs, etc., or by placing kewpie dolls costumed and named according to the photoplay or its cast.

8. Dancing Academies.

Costume and masquerade dances can be held at the public dancing academies. At such dances the costumes can be limited to models of the costumes worn in the photoplay. Impersonation of the stars may be the attraction. Heralds for the photoplay can be used as dance cards. The Movie Ball at which dancers impersonate motion picture stars is welcomed by the proprietor of the dance academy because it stimulates patronage. In arranging co-operative activities with dancing academies, it is well to select a date in advance of the showing of the particular photoplay around which the activity is centered, because theatre attendance is thus stimulated. Very little is gained by the activity centered on a photoplay which has already been shown at the theatre.

Cut-out 24-sheet posters properly lighted can be used around the dance floor. Stills and cut-outs can be used in the street windows, and the newspaper advertising of the dancing academy can carry announcement of the production, theatre name and play date.

9. Florists.

Titles and star names have been used by florists for a particular flower which they are prominently displaying or for which they have arranged a special sale. Displays at the florist's are particularly effective when the title of the production carries the name of a flower around which the florist can build the display; for instance "The Lily," "The Midnight Flower," "The Love Flower," etc. Florists can center a display in the theatre lobby, patrons being invited to cast a vote for what they consider the most attractive display.

10. Boy Scouts.

Distribution of heralds, street parades, etc., have been favored by Boy Scout organizations in return for special morn-

ing performances at the theatre, especially when the photoplay is connected in some way with the ideals or the purpose of Boy Scout activities.

11. Laundries.

Shirt boards printed with production, play date and theatre name bring the theatre's message into the home. The expense of cardboard and printing is usually divided between the theatre and the laundry. The distribution of heralds, rotos and miniatures in laundry packages is favored by those in charge of the laundry if some appropriate advertising can be imprinted.

12. Music Stores.

When a photoplay title is based on well-known musical comedies whose selections are on sale at the music store, co-operative advertising in the form of window displays is possible. Very often the selections used by the theatre orchestra and popular songs played at the organ give an opportunity for securing the co-operation of music stores. In some cases a section of the music store window is secured regularly for a tie-up with the song that will be featured in the organ solo. Photoplays with a well-known music theme offer similar possibilities. Theatres which show vaudeville and stage units have even more possibilities in this connection.

13. Recruiting Stations.

Army and navy recruiting stations will give "A" Board space to display theatre's advertising for photoplays with patriotic appeal. Heralds can be distributed at the recruiting station. A soldier or a sailor in uniform can stand on guard outside the theatre.

14. Law Schools.

A mock trial based on the theme of a photoplay where the discovery of evidence motivates the action, has been conducted by members of law school clubs. In one case the public was invited to the mock trial and newspaper accounts of the activity helped to develop further interest in the photoplay.

15. Department Stores.

Special sales have been promoted, based upon the title of a photoplay, especially when the title carried a number. Thus there have been 99c sales, 36c sales, etc. Certain productions with titles like "Damaged Goods." "The Silken Charm." suggest bargain sales or sales of certain products in which interest can be developed by having the department store tie-in with the theatre's advertising. The title, "The Crowded Hour," suggested hour sales at a department store where different hours of each day were allotted for the sale of particular items. Photoplays with the salesgirl theme offer similar possibilities. Further interest can be added in such sales by having salesgirls wear a costume similar to that worn in the photoplay. When a photoplay title carries the name of a color, such as "The Crimson Robe," "White Satin," "The Golden Hour," etc., window displays in one color, or sales of garments of one color, such as "white goods sales," are possible.

16. Insurance Companies.

Mock policies for protection against injury by laughter during the showing of a comedy at a particular theatre have been distributed on a co-operative basis by insurance companies who felt that the novelty of the advertising warranted their share in the expense.

17. Business Colleges.

Two student typists in the window, type between certain hours announcements concerning the photoplay, which are posted on bulletins where they can be read by the public. A prize is awarded to the one who estimates most closely the number of words typed during a certain period. The window can be suitably decorated with cut-outs and stills. The advantage to the business college is evident. Speed contests are also suggested.

18. Taxi Companies.

After midnight matinees free taxi rides to the homes of patrons within a certain zone were offered by a taxi company

in return for advertising given by the theatre. Spare tires of taxis can be used for cut-outs and tire inserts arranged on a co-operative basis.

19. Hotels.

A herald or theatre program is placed in the boxes of visitors at local hotels in return for announcement of the hotel service carried on the herald or the theatre program. Hotel lobby frames with theatre, play-date and program and special directions guiding out-of-town visitors to the theatre can also be arranged on some co-operative basis.

20. Athletic Contests.

Heralds properly imprinted can be distributed as score cards for football, baseball and basketball games.

21. Telegraph Offices.

Telegraph blanks typed with announcement concerning attraction, theatre and play date distributed to selected mailing list by regular telegraph messenger at a nominal charge.

22. City Departments.

For appropriate photoplays, the police, letter-carriers and firemen are given a special performance and the endorsements of the officials are used in advertising the photoplay.

23. Hope Chest Contests.

Ten or twelve local merchants are requested to contribute an article for a hope chest which will be awarded to the patron who estimates most correctly the article donated by each of the co-operating merchants. Each merchant displays five articles in his store window, one of the five articles being the article contributed by him to the hope chest. A ballot is distributed to patrons carrying the name and address of each merchant and a blank line beside each merchant's name on which the patron lists the article he thinks has been contributed by that merchant. If twelve merchants contribute articles for the contest and each displays five articles in the window, it is not likely that more than one patron will hit upon a per-

fectly correct list. The possibility of a full-page co-operative advertisement tying-in with the photoplay is evident. The merchant is interested in the contest especially because it brings so many to the store window. Of course a hope chest contest should only be arranged in connection with the showing of a photoplay whose theme would be appropriate for such an idea.

Conclusion.

Many of the co-operative advertising plans outlined above can be expanded to include co-operative advertising pages in the newspaper. Many of them could be made more effective by introducing some kind of contest where the prizes will be theatre passes or souvenirs donated by the co-operating merchants and others. Newspaper stories and articles on the amusement page are further possibilities when co-operative advertising campaigns develop widespread interest in the community or have introduced some news value feature.

Co-operative advertising has a mutual advantage. It has a business value for the merchant and others just as it has for the theatre.

However, it can be overdone if the manager approaches the same merchants too often. Many a good prospect has been lost because the co-operative advertising idea was suggested too often. Therefore the manager should attempt to change the co-operating party as often as possible. He should try to leave the merchant so satisfied with results that when another plan is suggested it will not be hard to convince him.

A letter of thanks and appreciation for the co-operation shown should never be omitted. The merchant, even if he feels that he has had a fair break and that his expense and efforts were justified by results, likes to have a letter making it evident that the manager is appreciative.

Display material should not be left in the merchant's window after play date. The merchant is not expected to safe-guard materials that are removed from the window and left at the store. If he is inconvenienced in this way by the neglect of the manager, the chances of further co-operation are lessened.

All this makes it clear that co-operative advertising has a double advantage for the theatre. It not only gives a more complete circulation of an advertised message at less cost than would be otherwise possible, but it develops good will for the theatre and those who have had satisfactory results are made to feel that the theatre is a beneficial influence.

It is no exaggeration to say that practically every merchant, school, club and society in your community is a possibility at some time or other for co-operative advertising.

Study the stills available for any photoplay and you will see illustrated countless articles similar to those sold by merchants. There is the basis for your co-operative display.

The title, the theme, the locale, the period—all offer possibilities. For instance, the banks are interested in the title which suggests thrift, the grocery store in the title that suggests one of its products or its policy, the luggage store in the travel theme, the shoe store in the Cinderella theme, the historical society in the history photoplay, the reading club in a photoplay from a well-known novel—and the museum—yes, even the museum is a possibility. Special exhibitions of paintings of the sea, paintings of war, paintings of mountains, paintings of western scenes, paintings of homesteads, etc., have been arranged and advertised and commented upon by newspapers when energetic theatre managers have convinced the authorities at the museum that such timely displays would attract the public—and incidentally help theatre attendance.

The social, fraternal, business and professional element of your community will co-operate—there is an advantage for them—if the local theatre manager does his part.

CHAPTER XXI

PRINTING MATERIALS

TO prepare newspaper advertising, to prepare house programs, and to use the imprint space on heralds and other advertising mediums, the theatre manager requires a knowledge of type, copy, the principles of layout, and ability to arrange an individual layout.

If the theatre's advertising is to be effective, its composition should not be left entirely to the local printer. The compositor is not supposed to be an advertising expert. His work is to compose evenly spaced display with the proper proportions. It is not for him to determine the relative selling importance of different elements. Even if he knew what should be emphasized, the busy composing room of the newspaper does not encourage careful thought and advertising service which should be done elsewhere. To be certain of results you should know what you want and how to specify it. This requires first of all a knowledge of printing materials.

Printing materials include:

- 1. Type
- 2. Cuts
- 3. Borders
- 4. Theatre name slug
- 5. Ornaments

Type.

There are two styles of type—body type and display type. Although display type may be used where body type would generally be used and vice versa, the main difference is that body type is usually a plain Roman letter used in large type areas, and display type is used for headings and display lines. For example, this page is printed in body type. The chapter heading is printed in display type.

Type Sizes.

Until the last century, type sizes were indicated by names such as Brevier, Pica, Great Primer, etc. All Brevier sizes were



THE LATH CARD IS USEFUL AFTER SNOW STORMS OR FOR DIRT PILES



approximately the same height. But there were shades of difference according to the foundry which manufactured the type.

Following the general trend towards standardization, the printers and type foundries worked out an exact standard of measurement. The basis of this standard is the "point," which is one-seventy-second of an inch. Accordingly, a 6-point letter is now precisely one-twelfth of an inch in height no matter who casts the letter.

Because the point is too small a unit of measure for the height of many lines, a second standard has been adopted—the "Pica." This measures 12 points, or one-sixth of an inch. In measuring the height of large type it is more convenient to figure by picas than by points, just as it is more convenient sometimes to use the foot than the inch in linear measure.

Height as applied to type connotes the space from the top to the bottom of the type body.

The type face may have three parts—the body, the ascender and the descender. Letters like t, k and l have ascenders, while g, p, q and y have descenders. Therefore letters of a definite point size are not always exactly equal in height. For example, one 12-point letter may be slightly larger than another 12-point letter because of the ascender and descender. Therefore the point is merely an indication of the size of the base and not the size of the letter. Long ascenders mean small bodies, and short ascenders give more room for the body.

The width of a letter is measured by the unit "em." This gets its name from the fact that the m is the most nearly square of the letters. Each type face has its own "em" measure, which is the square of the face. Thus a 6-point "em" is just half as wide and half as high as a 12-point or "pica em." (The "em," other than the "pica em," is used only in figuring composition because the printer is paid for the number of "ems" set.)

Only two dimensions are used in specifying type, because the third dimension is a constant factor—it being understood that type will be "type high" to make an impression on paper.

The standard type sizes, measured in points, are 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 18, 24 and 30. It is evident that in the smaller

sizes the advance is by 2 points; above 14-point the increase is by 6 points. In the still larger sizes the increase is by picas. Type higher than 120-point is seldom cast; above this size letters are cut into hardwood and referred to as "wood type" or "poster type."

One-type faces have various styles—roman, italics, and boldface. For example:

This is straight roman.
This is in italics.
This is in boldface.

The same size type may be set in five widths—extra condensed, condensed, regular, extended, extra extended or wide. For example:

This line is extra condensed.
This line is regular.
This is an extended line.
This is extra extended.

It is evident that a condensed letter reduces legibility but permits a greater number of letters to be used in a given space. Extended type gains clearness at the expense of using more width for the same number of letters.

Type Faces.

There are numerous standard type families, according to the different characteristics of a particular type face. There are varieties of any one family which have general characteristics, but smaller differences. These differences make it possible to get a certain diversity of type face, while retaining one general character. Your printers will show you the families they have in stock. These are the only ones that will interest you. The printer can also show you catalogues listing all the styles and faces, but these will do you little good if he does not carry them.

Styles of type include inline, outline, monotone and shaded type.

There are also script faces, black letter (such as Old English), and engraver faces (such as typo), and a number of other so-called "freak type faces."

Hand-Lettered Type.

Besides the many well-known standard type faces already cast and available in some variety at the local printers', there is hand-lettered type. This is not type but is made in a cut. It involves the expense of the artist who does the handlettering, and the expense of photo-engraving. The main justification of hand-lettered type is its novelty. But no matter how novel type is, if it is not legible, it is worthless. Another advantage of hand-lettered type is that the clever artist can have the letter face suggest the product advertised. For instance, skillful art work can suggest daintiness, or strength, or elegance, or speed, etc. But very, very, very few theatres have available an artist whose hand-lettering can be at the same time both novel and appropriate and legible. The hand-lettering that is available on the standard cuts received from the exchange for local advertising should suffice. Even this should be used sparingly. Hand-lettered type, except for title and a striking display line, is seldom satisfactory. The attempt to use hand-lettering in white against black display is usually disastrous unless done by a master artist. The human eye is used to reading black type against white. Consequently, this is to be preferred.

The Use of Type.

If type, no matter how novel, is not easily legible, it is worthless. Aim first for legibility. The main cause of poor use of type can be traced to the attempt at the eccentric and the startling. Simplicity is the cardinal rule. Then the following might be added:

1. Avoid vertical spelling, because your public is in the habit of reading from left to right.

2. Avoid over-capitalization, because the eye is not used to it. Do not use lines of all capital letters, particularly in the small sizes of type set in long lines; with letters all set the same length there is nothing for the eye to "hold on" to. In roman, the ascenders and descenders break the line.

3. Avoid too many varieties of type face in the one advertisement. Even with one type face, enough varieties can be secured to give contrast, for you have caps, boldface, italics, extended, and upper and lower lettering. Large areas of type in italics or boldface are not easy to read; use italics and boldface to emphasize details.

4. Paragraph liberally. The short paragraph adds to read-

ability and is inviting.

5. Avoid small types, because in newspaper reproduction they fill up and become unattractive and unreadable.

Type smaller than 8-point seldom reproduces well in the newspaper advertisement.

6. Avoid too much boldface or italics, and use these only

for individual emphasis.

7. The length of a line of type which is ideal for legibility depends upon the size of the type. The fact that newspaper column lines have a standard width did not happen by chance. This standard width, is most suitable for legibility with the 7-point type that is used in the newspaper column. A maximum and minimum line width for each size of type should be considered. It is just as hard to read 8-point type on a 14-pica line as it is to read 24-point type on an 8-pica line. For ready reference the following minimum and maximum for line width is indicated for the more commonly used type sizes:

Type Size	Minimum (in Picas)	Maximum (in Picas)
6 Point	. 8	. 10
8 Point	. 9	. 13
10 Point	. 13	. 16
12 Point	. 14	. 21
14 Point	. 18	. 24

Limitations.

In actual practice the theatre advertiser is limited to the use of the comparatively few type faces available at the local newspaper or at the local printers'. Therefore, for your purpose get a copy of the style book used by the shops you patronize. If there is no style book, you can at least get proofs of the type faces available. If the newspaper equipment is inadequate, the manager can co-operate with local advertisers to request that additional type fonts be secured. Adequate

service is to be expected. Local advertisers should not be handicapped by the deficiencies of the local newspaper. An active local advertising club by concentrated action can often get the needed improvement.

Cuts.

As far as theatre advertising is concerned, only two types of cuts need be considered—line cuts and half-tone cuts. The half-tone cut reproduces a variety of tones or shadings. As its name indicates, it gives "half-tones" rather than one tone. The line cut reproduces in one tone. The line cut is generally used to reproduce solid figures, outline drawings and letterings. The half-tone is generally used to reproduce scenes or portraits. The line cut generally costs about one-half as much as the half-tone cut.

If a lighter shade or pattern is desired for the line cut it can be "hatched" with cross lines, or a Benday screen can be used. Benday or Ben-Day is a mechanical device for making patterns or dots or stipples. These give a certain lightness to what otherwise would be too solid a black mass. These also gray solid black areas and thus permit more even printing. These add a certain naturalness and give a better newspaper effect than a half-tone cut, and at less cost.

The half-tone cut gives more softness and naturalness to reproduction. In preparing a half-tone cut the layout is photographed through a screen composed of sheets of glass ruled into fine lines. On one glass sheet, the lines are ruled diagonally, from the upper left to the lower right corner. On the other glass the ruling is reversed. When the glasses are faced, the result is a mesh of thousands of tiny squares. The number of lines ruled to the inch gives the number of what is called the "screen." For example, the 60-screen has 60 lines to each inch of glass. For solid masses the black penetrates the rule lines and thus we get gradations of tone. As far as the theatre advertiser is concerned, his chief concern, if photo-engraving must be done locally, is to ascertain the screen required by the paper; and, if a combination cut is required, how the elements are to be put together. Therefore a conference with the engraver is suggested.

The screen used for a particular cut is determined by the paper on which the cut will appear. For most newspaper printing, 50 to 65 screens are used. Finer screens would clog up the cheap ink on the fibrous newspaper page and give a black smudge. For better stock paper 100 or 120 screens should be used. The finer screens should be used on hard surface paper known as plate or enamel paper. It is possible to print a 60-screen on the better grade paper, but the result will be crude. If you cannot get a cut made to suit a particular paper stock, it is better to use no cut.

It may happen that a half-tone cut must be copied. Unless the engraver uses a screen that exactly matches the screen of the cut to be copied, perfect reproduction is impossible. The original half-tone gives the stipple. A line cut will reproduce this stipple and give what is practically a half-tone, though made by the line process. Therefore, in this emergency it is better to order a line cut.

A general rule that can be safely followed is to avoid the use of half-tones for reproduction on newspaper stock, if a line cut of the same material is available. Half-tones will smudge and look sloppy after a few printings. The line cut carries less detail generally and will get more attention in newspaper work. If you use a half-tone cut, let it be one with solid outline. The half-tone profile, for instance, will smudge until the profile cannot be recognized.

Cuts are either the original photo-engraving, or an electro, or a "mat." Most of the cuts for theatre use are in matrix or "mat" form. The matrix is a mould prepared by beating a soft paper flong into the crevices of the cut and then baking it. The flong is composed of layers of coarse paper pasted together. The baking is done on the steam table with blankets absorbing the moisture. The result is a light, tough card—the matrix. This matrix, in the printing office, is put into a casting box and molten metal is poured over it, which forms the stereotype. Many stereotypes can be cast from a single mat. It is the stereotype that is used with cylinder press printing. The majority of newspapers to-day can cast from mats. Before 1915, a survey showed that fewer than 100 small town newspapers or printing shops were provided with casting boxes. If

you cannot have mats cast locally, it is often cheaper to send your mats to a nearby city for casting rather than purchase electros. This of course applies to smaller operations where pennies must be watched, because with half-tones the electro is preferable.

Notching.

Where type is to be set into a cut space, room must be made by cutting away part of the cut. If a section is cut within the border, the cut is said to be "mortised." If a portion of the edge is cut, the cut is "notched" or "stepped," the latter connoting a series of notches in step form.

Rules and Borders.

A printer's rule is a straight line or a series of straight lines cast in type metal or brass. They vary from the finest hairline to a width of 6-point or more; but generally the rule of more than 6 points is called a border.

Besides the plain rule borders there are decorative borders available at the local newspaper office.

Purpose of Border.

The main purpose of a border is to separate one advertisement from surrounding printed matter. The border also gives unity to the advertisement by holding it together. A distinctive border as an ornament adds attention value. A distinctive border, regularly used, also makes an advertisement more easily recognizable. Rules can be used to keep sections of an advertisement separated; but they should never stretch entirely across the space, because this defeats the unity of the advertisement and makes reader progress difficult. Smaller advertisements, unless surrounded by borders, are often lost because they seem to be part of the larger ads. Rules or borders may be used to frame the entire display or to box or panel some section of your advertisement to give it special attention or to help balance it.

Solid rules in 6- or 12-point size should be sparingly used, especially in theatre advertising, because they look cheap and carry the suggestion of mourning. Besides, they overshadow

your important display matter. With larger size advertisements 12-point solid border should be considered the limit, and it is often better to use a pair of 2-point or 4-point rules with 2 or more points of white space between.

How thick a border should be used for an advertisement? This depends upon the surrounding material and the size of the particular layout. However, by using only plain rule borders many effective combinations are possible. Thus thickness is given without creating the bad impression caused by the same thickness in solid border. For instance, use a 2-point rule on the outside and a half-point rule on the inside, with about 2 points of white space between the rules. We have in this combination a much more effective border than if 6-point solid rule were used. The size of the outside rule, the inside rule and the white space between can be enlarged, keeping the same proportion of two to one-half to two.

By using plain rules in combination, different corner effects are possible. These make the attraction power of the layout stronger. Note the other corner combinations that are possible by using only the material available at even the smallest newspaper office, as shown in the samples given in the appendix.

Border Position.

Borders can either surround the entire ad or be used only at top and bottom, or only on the sides, or only at one side and bottom.

Cuts, slugs and display type can all be broken through the border as explained in examples shown in the appendix.

Hand-drawn borders not only involve extra expense, but can also ruin the advertisement unless prepared by a real expert. The hand-drawn border is prepared to give a distinctive appearance. The rope design border for a Western picture, the smoke design border for a fire picture, etc., are common enough in theatre advertising. But usually this design, after it has passed through the average newspaper press, is nothing to boast of.

If borders are not carefully matched at the corners, or if the cast borders have been joined together carelessly to make proper lengths, a careless, sloppy appearance is the result. This can be guarded against by careful proof-reading.

Your choice of borders is limited by the supply at the local newspaper office. However, you can buy special borders for your own use, but these are often lost because in breaking down a form the borders are melted just like the regular borders. Some newspapers for regular advertisers prepare a special border without cost to the advertiser, and this border will be limited in its use only to that advertiser.

Spacing.

Space between the words when the type is not set in regular line is secured by using quads and spaces. Spaces are slivers of metal about one-third or one-fourth of an em in size. They are called 3-to-em or 4-to-em spaces, etc. In hand-set work the usual spacing is 3 to the em. In linotype composition the spaces are wedge-shape and divide letters and words equally. Quads are "em" in space. They are used to indent paragraphs, to separate sentences, and to fill out incomplete lines. Letter spaces (or 3-to-em) are used to widen display lines. For instance, if an extended letter in the same type face is not available, a letter space between each of your letters and larger space between the words will give you an apparently larger letter. Thus you can get an 18-point effect from a 12-point line.

Space between lines is gained by using "leads," "reglets," or "furniture." A lead is a brass 1 point thick or type metal 2 points thick. Just as letter-spacing gives more apparent height to type in a word, so leading will give greater prominence to the words in a line. Therefore, 8-point leaded with 2 points is often better than a solid 10-point—and besides you get the advantage of more letters to the line. To get 4-point space between lines use two 2-point leads or "double lead." To get 6- or 12-point space, use wooden strips called reglets. Above 12-point you use "furniture," which is wooden strips in larger size, or metal slugs.

For body type the leading is usually done on the slug. A linotype casts a solid line of type from moulds or matrices; it need not cast a 6-point letter on a 6-point slug, it can cast it

on an 8-point slug. But generally a 6 is used on a 7-point slug. This is indicated in the marking by a diagonal line between the figures, the smaller figure coming first to indicate the face of the type and the larger figure the size of the slug, as 6/7.

Theatre Name Slug.

The majority of theatre advertisements carry a signature or name plate. This is sometimes supplemented by an institutional or slogan line. This plate is called a "slug" rather than a cut because it is kept at the newspaper office for general use rather than for a single printing use as a cut. The name plate should be a drawn design, if possible. However, the local typographer could arrange a plate with a distinctive lettering and an attractive border. The main thing is to have the name plate neat, attractive and distinctive. When you have selected the plate design, have slugs of different sizes prepared to fit different size layouts, and keep a supply of different sizes on hand so that your slugs can be replaced regularly. Because a good electro can seldom be made from another electro, be sure that your original photo-engraving plate is carefully marked and not lost. Regular printing wears down the name plate and it becomes sloppy in appearance if not replaced. The cost of such replacement is small. Yet many a good advertisement loses its quality appearance because of the worn, ragged, sloppy name plate.

Ornaments.

Although printing, rather than newspaper advertising, uses ornaments or florets, they are sometimes useful for the advertiser. The newspaper has a collection of florets—small figures in 6- and 12-point sizes. Attractive borders can sometimes be made of these florets cast in line; but generally they are used to break white space where a rule or a dash would not be effective.

Emergency Material.

In emergency, for a particularly large letter or a crude silhouette when no wood type letter is available, linoleum or patent leather can be used. A good quality of fine-grained linoleum is almost as good as the expensive patent leather. Draw your design in reverse. Cut it out with a sharp knife. Cement it on a wooden block. Shave this block type high and it can be run in the presses. Thus, in an emergency you can make your own type for block display. Of course, for newspaper printing where stereotyped plates are used a metal cut is essential; but for smaller runs on a flat-bed press the linoleum cut will suffice.

Conclusion.

As far as standard printing materials are concerned, the individual theatre advertiser is restricted by the equipment of the local printer or local newspaper's supply. This material can be mastered by experience. How it should be arranged will now be discussed in the following chapters—"Principles of Layout," and "Copy."

CHAPTER XXII

PRINCIPLES OF LAYOUT

T is comparatively easy to master by experience the printing materials used in advertising. But how to arrange those materials effectively can be mastered to a limited degree by experience and by principles. It is impossible to make a master of layout by rule of thumb, just as it is impossible to make an artist or a designer. There are few fixed principles which always apply. Here we have a creative activity—something which requires taste, feeling and design, an appreciation of harmony and the application of what is generally referred to as genius and individual ingenuity.

As far as theatre advertising is concerned, however, masterful creative work is not expected. In fact, if theatre advertising would avoid attempts at over-artistic, eccentric, intricate and elaborate layout, it would be much improved. Quite a few theatres could be built with the money that has been actually wasted on theatre newspaper advertisements which attempted to be over-artistic instead of being attractive and simple. What theatre advertising needs is the application of a few simple, elemental principles of layout such as will be outlined here.

The Theatre "Artist."

In many cases, the ineffective theatre advertisement can be traced to what is known as "the theatre artist." Too many theatres have on their payroll a staff "artist" whose function it is to prepare hand-drawn theatre advertisements. This so-called "artist" is usually a total loss on the theatre budget. Many a theatre ticket sale has been lost through his extreme attempts at the "artistic." Very, very few theatres could afford a staff artist competent enough to prepare hand-drawn advertisements.

The staff "artist" prepares a layout usually three or four times the actual size in which the layout will be reproduced.

This is because engravers can work best from larger original layouts. This layout looks brilliant in the glossy black and the pure white of the hand-drawing on the bristol board. The intricate art work, the hand-drawn letters and all the other "artistic elements" of the layout look very different when reproduced on the coarse, yellowish-white newspaper stock with sleazy ink. Very often the layout is printed with white lettering on black background. It is true that pure white on solid black has attention value. But the newspaper does not give in its reproduction the pure white and the strong black. Those letters, which in the original layout stood 36 points high, when reduced to 8-point type are undecipherable. This is no fault of the newspaper. The coarse paper and the speed of printing have many mechanical limitations, making such a result inevitable. Consequently, many a pretty layout which in the original seemed most artistic, becomes a horrible blotch on the newspaper page. Fine details are clogged up with ink, and the result is smudge. The hand-lettering resembles hen-tracks; bold, black backgrounds are faded and spotty. To prove that all this is a very mild account of what happens when the usual hand-drawing "artist's" layout is reproduced in the newspaper page, turn to the amusement page of the newspapers.

What justifies the existence of the average theatre artist? As far as illustration is concerned, he usually does no more than copy the standard cut as illustrated in the press sheet. If he tries to change it, the result can be labeled "Damaged by improvements." If hand lettering is required for the title, this, too, is available in the press sheet cut: better used as it is. rather than copied or altered by the "artist." An attractive Many a press sheet cut offers this, and besides there are the decorative borders in the newspaper office, also countless combinations of plain rule borders. As far as the large areas of hand-lettered type are concerned, it is evident that standard type faces for large areas of type are always more legible and more effective than any hand lettering. It might be mentioned that not one "artist" in a thousand can do hand lettering that is effective, especially in smaller sizes. hand lettering on black background over large areas is seldom legible in newspaper reproduction, unless the lettering is very large or prepared by a master artist. Of course, hand-lettering can be more precisely placed on the theatre layout because no allowance must be made for type widths and shoulders; but hand lettering for titles is available in the standard cuts supplied in the exchange. As far as text is concerned, standard body type is more legible than the average hand lettering.

Why, then, the theatre "artist"? Printing materials are available at the newspaper office or at the local printers'. Display materials—illustration and hand lettering—are available in the cuts supplied by producer-distributors. What individual theatre can afford to pay for art work comparable to that produced by the best commercial artists in the country?

Standard Cuts.

These artists are hired at considerable expense to prepare the art work for the standard cuts supplied to theatres. About 70 per cent of the leading commercial artists of the country are in New York City. Many of these contribute the art work of the leading producer-distributors. These artists are selected according to their skill in particular styles of illustration. Thus, one is selected for landscape drawing, another for silhouette, another for costumes, another for action, another for male forms, another for female forms, another for profiles, etc. Then others are selected for different styles of hand-lettering according to particular requirements. Besides these master artists who are given a particular assignment, there is the regular art staff of each producer-distributor art department. Consequently, monotonous uniformity of layout, technique and illustration is avoided. The theatre using only one artist naturally gets a certain monotonous uniformity.

It is interesting to know that the cost of art work and photoengraving for the standard cuts available for the average feature photoplay released by the leading companies is over \$1,000. Yet the results of all this expense are available for individual theatre use at a cost which is calculated in pennies rather than in dollars. Despite all this, we find individual theatres neglecting this material and resorting regularly to some home town "artist." This means extra expense of "artist" salary, cost of photo-engraving prepared locally, and cost of electros or mats. But most important, this practice usually means the loss of ticket sales which would have been made if the standard cuts had been used effectively.

Why, then, neglect the standard materials? Is it because the use of these materials is not generally understood?

It might be argued that the cut service of certain producerdistributors is so inferior that their material cannot be used. There is, admittedly, a wide variation in the quality of cut service rendered by the different companies. This is something which should be considered in arranging your film contracts. Suppose two competitive producer-distributors offer for sale two photoplays of equal merit. A rental of \$100 a day is asked by one. A rental of \$125 a day is asked by the other. If the cut service of the producer-distributor asking the \$100-a-day rental is so inferior that you are forced to have cuts prepared locally, you have really the better bargain by buying film at higher rental from the producer-distributor with superior cut service. The inferior cut service cannot be used. This means that you have the following expenses: the salary of a staff artist. the expense of photo-engraving prepared locally, the expense of electrotyping prepared locally. This expense more than balances the \$25 you might have saved in film rental.

Plus this is the fact that the locally prepared work will never be of a quality equal to that which is available in the standard cut service of certain producer-distributors. Therefore consider cut service. Do not judge the value of cuts by the way they appear on smooth, glossed paper such as is used in the press sheets of some producer-distributor companies. You know well that the cuts will not reproduce in the same way on the coarse newspaper stock. When the press sheet is printed on the same grade of paper as is used by newspapers, you have an idea of how the cut will actually reproduce in the newspaper. When theatre advertisers realize this point, press sheet paper will no longer be used to hide deficiencies in cut service.

Combination Houses.

It might be argued that a staff artist is necessary at a theatre with a combination policy of vaudeville and photoplays. Why?

Perhaps because cuts are generally not available for vaudeville acts. However, sets of standard cuts supplied for photoplays can be saved for use as attractors in vaudeville advertising. But usually the vaudeville announcement as prepared by the staff artist is only a mass of hand lettering which lists the vaudeville acts. This listing would be much more legible in standard type faces. The artist may also contribute a sprinkling of gargoyles, scrolls, curlycues, tortured lines and strained curves; but these defeat the very purpose of an advertisement—legibility which will sell.

It has been said that a nationally known advertising expert refers to the amusement page as "the comic section." He goes there for his laughs. This is his reason why: "Think of the good money being spent for that space and then see what is put in the space!"

Medium.

The most important thing to realize before arranging your layout is the mechanical limitations of the press and the nature of the material on which the layout is to be printed. One visit to a newspaper press will make this evident.

Purpose.

The purpose of any advertisment is to sell. All the elemental principles of layout ran be traced to this. First of all, no advertisment will sell unless it is noticed. It must win attention. Realize that the busy reader is turning pages of a newspaper, and that the theatre advertisement must reach out and catch his attention before the page is turned. The exception is the reader who seeks deliberately for a particular advertisement. Even then the quest for entertainment might result in the more attractive advertisement bidding so strongly for attention that other advertisements would not be noticed. The patron who deliberately seeks out a particular theatre advertisement is usually already sold through some other medium of advertising. Selling with newspaper advertising involves more than passing out goods to one who asks for them.

Attention winning depends upon certain elements of display. These are illustration, borders, headline, white space, panels, theatre name-plate, etc. When attention is won, it is the object of the effective advertisement to carry on that attention to the point of interest, and from the interest on to conviction; also to make the conviction so forceful that it will lead to purchase, no matter what the obstacle encountered may be. Of course this is the ideal. Every principle of layout can be traced right to this.

Surrounding Material.

No advertisement can ever be fairly judged as to its attention value until it is seen in relation to surrounding material. What seems to be a striking advertisement will often become very ordinary because of surrounding material. For instance, a striking black and white advertisement on a page where heavy display is the surrounding material will not be so noticeable. Consequently, study the general tone and the general get-up of a page on which your advertisement will appear. For this it is useful to take a piece of white paper the size of your average theatre advertisement and place it on the positions of the page which your advertisement might occupy. Then, with an eye on surrounding material, determine the general tone of your layout, depending upon what the surrounding material is; shape, or border, or white space, or display type will then have their relative value determined.

Shape.

An advertisement is a single unit. As a unit, a point of extreme importance is its shape. The very shape of the theatre advertisement can suggest entertainment. Consequently, avoid the square shape, because it is too stiff and cold. A 5x3 or a 3x5 proportion is preferred—three nines or three twos. Don't argue that a boxy, square advertisement is necessitated by the shape of standard cuts furnished; these need not be used intact, but can be adapted for different shapes. The shape of the advertisement should be in harmony with the product advertised. This should not be carried to extremes. However, it applies in a way to the theatre advertisement. It is evident that the 3-high by 5-wide shape is more suitable to the outdoor, the panoramic, the action photoplay. The long, narrow shape is better suited to photoplays with delicate, dainty appeal.

Focal Point.

The eye naturally tends to center on a place in the layout which is about two-fifths from the top and to the right —in other words, slightly above the lineal center. If this is so, and experience proves that it is, then this focal point should be used for display material. The layout which shows white space or an insignificant and unnoticeable detail in the focal point is evidently defective.

Climax.

Because any advertisement should be a unit, unity is secured by arranging details so that there is one climax. A double or triple climax is not only disconcerting, and not only leaves a scattered impression rather than one impression, but it weakens unity. Climax depends upon giving relatively greater or relatively less emphasis to details. Emphasis depends not alone on size or not alone on shape, but on contrast.

Contrast.

It is relative contrast which gives emphasis. For instance, a midget, although small, is noticeable among giants, because of contrast. In a group of midgets, the midget would not command attention. A giant among midgets is noticeable. In a group of giants, a particular giant would not command attention. It is contrast in each case that helps win attention.

Contrast in advertising has two applications. The individual advertisement wins attention according to the contrast which it presents with surrounding material. If surrounding advertisements are set in heavy display, the advertisement in light display attracts attention. The page then seems to carry but two advertisements: the light advertisement, and all the others. Consequently, watch the practice of your competitors, and use the principle of contrast. If they are in a rut, your problem is easy. If they are alert, and eventually follow the general tone of your layout, then swing to the other extreme.

Within your own advertisement emphasis for particular details does not depend upon size, but on contrast. Type dis-

play is not a matter of size, but of relative contrast of sizes. Thus, a properly spaced two-seven layout will be better displayed than a three-nine heavily crowded with copy. In the latter case, even if the type is larger, the display will be less. Keep big display type lines away from each other. Two lines of 36-point type for a title, resting on two 30-point lines of text, will have little display value. Therefore, open up with 6 points of space—or run a pica reglet between; or, cut down the size of title to 30-point and drop down the display text type to 12- or 18-point, because the white space will give greater display than would otherwise be secured.

In the printed layout, emphasis is secured by position, the use of white space, variety of type, by italics, by panels, etc. But in every case the arrangement of elements should be such that emphasis is secured by the contrast.

White Space.

White space should not be considered just as something which is plastered with type and more type. In the skill-ful layout, white space appears to be set in just as carefully as type. It blends. It tones down. It heightens the effect of particular elements. It seems to be a moving, vital part of the layout. The beginner thinks that the paper space which he has purchased gives him a return for his money only when it carries as much type as possible. Consequently, a good rule for the beginner to follow is: "Devote at least one-quarter of your layout to white space." Many an advertisement is practically wasted because too much type is crowded into too small a space.

Size.

The human eye is not microscopic. An extra inch may save what money is invested in an advertisement. It is evident that its value does not depend entirely upon size. This, too, is a matter of contrast. If the surrounding advertisements are large and uniformly the same size, the small, well arranged advertisement, because of contrast, will command attention.

Usually, larger advertisements do command more attention. However, it cannot be argued that attention value increases as does the size. Attention value does increase in direct proportion to the increase in size only as far as the quarter-page layout. Beyond that size the ratio of increase of attention to increase in size is only about 50 per cent.

As far as theatre advertising is concerned, whenever many other mediums of advertising have been used to sell a particular program, there should be a very convincing reason to justify a larger size than about three columns by ten. In some cases, because of peculiar arrangement of the amusement page, advertisement layouts of particular sizes and particular shapes are given exceptional prominence. For instance, narrow two-column advertisements may be placed next to the reading matter, and consequently are not easily "buried" on the page as others are. This is the exception.

In some cases it is important to have a part of the advertisement above the newspaper fold. Then a shape and size is sought which will secure good position. In these cases the folded newspaper read on the trolley usually means that advertisements below the fold are overlooked. However, these are extreme cases where size is determined by position.

Position.

The position given a particular theatre layout is generally determined in the composing room according to attempts at a well-balanced page. It may be possible to get a set location. It may be possible, by understanding the problems of a particular shop, to send advertisements of a shape and a size which will generally secure preferred positions. It does the theatre manager little good to be told that advertisers in general rank effective positions as follows: front page, back page, left top of left page, right top of right page, etc. A theatre advertisement is destined for a particular page, and common sense and study of that particular page will suggest favorable position possibilities. It should be remembered that advertisements set next to the gutter, that is, next to the side or bottom margins, give the possibility of shaping the layout so that the gutter side space will give prominence to the display. Therefore, borders next to the gutter are not always advisable. But be sure of the gutter

Balance.

The advertisement, as a unit, should balance all its elements. Proper balance is one means of giving the quality impression which influences the reader. Only a few principles of balance need be suggested, because this is something which is regulated according to individual cases.

The top-heavy advertisement, of course, not in extreme, does not appear out of balance, because of the position in which the newspaper page is held when read; but a bottom-heavy advertisement does appear out of balance. Thus the layouts of advertising experts regularly avoid bottom-heaviness.

If heavy display units are placed at extreme right or extreme left, some balancing elements should stand on the opposite side. Balance to a heavy illustration can be secured with display type, or with a panel in which the area of type is relative in size to that of the illustration.

Not only should display units and type areas be properly balanced, but white space also. Thus, if there is a half-inch margin of white space on the left side of the layout, and there is no margin on the right, a lack of balance appears. A large area of white space at the upper left should generally be balanced by white space at lower right.

Proper balance is usually absent only when someone has failed to keep in mind the simple principles of balance. A study of layouts prepared by experts is the most effective way of mastering at least the fundamentals of what is an important, but not a very difficult quality to secure in layout—balance.

Movement.

The primary purpose of an advertisement is to secure action. As far as winning attention is concerned, we know that actual movement such as we have in the animated display, or in the flasher sign, or in the flasher border, can secure more attention than the stationary sign.

Actual movement, obviously, is impossible on the printed page. However, there are various devices which create the illusion of movement. For instance, the very long, narrow layout is more likely to create the illusion of movement than the square, solid layout. The arrow border suggests movement more than a heavy, solid black border. The illustration of the moving aeroplane, the speeding automobile, the jumping athlete, and the riding horseman, all suggest movement. The illustration of a house or a tree or a standing figure do not. Certain display type faces which are delicate suggest movement more than do the blunt block faces. White space used in a way which makes it seem that the white space is "flowing through" the advertisement, gives a better impression of movement than does the layout solidly set with type. A panel set off-center rather than squarely suggests movement. As far as attention-winning is concerned it is evident that advertisements which create the illusion of movement will be noticed more than others.

But movement has another application. Once the reader has been attracted to the advertisement, nothing should impede his movement, which becomes accelerated as he passes from top to bottom. If there is too wide a space between headlines and body type, requiring what might be called an "optical leap," the tired eye might move off the advertisement rather than take the leap. If an illustration facing off the advertisement rides the reader on to an adjoining layout, we have a defect of movement. Therefore, illustrations should look into or cut into your advertisement rather than lead off. Thus a profile facing right is better placed on the left side than on the right side of the layout. The riding horseman moving left is better placed on the right side rather than on the left side of the layout. An arrow flying upward is better placed towards the bottom than at the extreme top of the layout.

It must be remembered that the average eye is tired and will follow suggestions of direction. But once led astray it will seldom retrace its steps. The eye going through an advertisement is like a stranger going through an unknown territory. Therefore, show signposts, and have your pathways of movement clearly indicated. Help progress as much as possible. Make the progress direct and not criss-cross, or roundabout, or jumpy.

In a three-column advertisement do not force the reader to climb from the bottom of your copy lower left to copy upper right. Rather arrange your copy so that the reader passing down your advertisement can get it without the necessity of retracing steps.

You cannot expect an eye to move on through your advertisement if there are heavy rules like so many hurdles blocking the way. Therefore, in the body of the layout use rules sparingly and avoid rules which go entirely across your space.

As the human eye is accustomed to reading upper and lower letters and not capitals, avoid long lines of capitals. As the human eye is accustomed to reading along a straight line from left to right, avoid vertical spelling and curved printing. They may look artistic, but you are not in the art business but rather in the business of selling. The more easily the legible message is mastered, the better for you.

These are fundamental principles. This matter of movement on the printed page has been discussed with fine-spun theory. There are also theories of dynamic symmetry justifying with mathematical certainty the effectiveness of certain arrangements. But arrangement of layout, like so many other things, is primarily a matter of common sense. The obvious thing is usually the simple and the natural—and is generally more effective than affected attempts at intricate novelty. Novelty and intricate arrangement are used in two ways: by the expert—sparingly and effectively, by the beginner—generously and ineffectively. Lean hard on common sense and steer clear of intricate arrangement. Here again we have a subject which involves rather the application of "what not to do" than rules of "what to do."

Illustrations.

Pictures can usually tell a story more convincingly than can type. Busy people with little time to spend would rather get the message through a picture than through type. It is no exaggeration to say that one picture is better than a thousand words if it is the right picture. If it is the right picture! How many illustrations are used in theatre advertisements which are not the right one. The familiar clutch of hero and heroine is seldom the right picture, inasmuch as this illustration is not distinctive of any particular photoplay.

Illustrations in amusement advertisements are generally attention-winners which bring the reader to the space. They may give some indication of the general tone or locale or spirit of a photoplay; they may sell tickets if they show a striking costume, a beautiful scene or a dramatic moment; but generally they only attract the reader to the space, and the real selling must be done by copy. The illustration or the display "sells" the text, while the text sells the tickets! In selecting your illustration ask the question: "What is this illustration supposed to do?" The fact that theatre advertisements usually have some kind of an illustration, is no justification for the selection of a cut which can actually do nothing except occupy space.

What about illustrations used in national advertising today? These illustrations accomplish different things. Some attract attention. Others help to make the message more appealing. Others help to interpret the message by illustrating a particular product or visualizing some outstanding feature. Some show how a product can be used or show the disadvantages of not using a product. Usually an illustrated element in national advertising serves as a reminder to familiarize the public with a particular trade-marked figure. But in these cases the illustration has repetition value, inasmuch as the same product has been advertised over a long period of time.

Few of the above effects of illustration in advertising can apply to theatre advertising, which offers a unique problem because the program is changed within a few days.

Selection.

If the illustration in the theatre advertisement serves mainly to attract attention, it remains for the theatre advertiser to select from all the available material that cut or that part of a cut which will be most effective. Usually about ten different cuts are available for a feature photoplay. The widths of these cuts are in multiples of standard column widths—from one- to seven-column width. They are cut for use in newspaper columns and therefore are slightly less than the 12-em standard column width, to leave room for dropping in a 12-point border. Thus the one-column cut without any change in width will fit

into every single column of a newspaper. The two-column cut without any change will fit into every double column of a newspaper; so with the other sizes. The cut illustration is prepared by high-salaried commercial artists working under the guidance of those who understand the entertainment selling points of a particular photoplay, and the problems of the theatre manager who will use the illustrations.

Adaptation of Cuts.

It is not as generally understood by theatre advertisers as it should be, that there are countless possible uses of the standard cuts. By adaptation and rearrangement the ten standard cuts in part or in combination become really about 150 different cuts. First of all, the entire cut as it is shown in the press book need not be used. Lettering can be removed. The cut may carry the name of the director, assistant director, title writer, or the camera man. These are included in the cut, under the contract arrangement with the producer-distributor, requiring that the company deliver the cut to theatres with certain credit lettering of a certain size in proportion to the size of the title lettering. The theatre manager uses this credit lettering only if he feels that it will help to accomplish his purposebring people into his theatre. Consequently, any unnecessary lettering which serves no purpose at the theatre, or spoils the proportion of a particular layout can be cropped away.

The illustration need not be used in its full length or its full width. The head can be used and the rest of the figure discarded. For example, only the headlight of an engine in an illustration, instead of the entire train, can be used; only tree tops, instead of the entire tree, can be used; only the roof, instead of the entire house, can be used, etc., etc.

In cases such as this, when part of the illustration suggests the other details so that the reader instinctively fills in those details according to what is suggested, we have the application of an important advertising principle—suggestion. It helps to effectiveness. For instance, the sombrero and the six-shooter, properly placed, suggest the bandit face and all the other details of a bandit, and the impression is usually much deeper than would be secured by showing the entire form.

Not only can particular elements of a particular cut be used so that parts of a one-column cut are used in a one-, two- or three-column layout, but also cuts which are marked two-column, three-column and seven-column offer possibilities for use in one-column and two-column layouts. Thus, a striking element from the seven-column cut could be used while the rest of the cut is discarded. So also one, two or even three distinct elements of a three-column cut could be selected for use in a one-column layout.

Attractive elements from different size cuts can be combined in one layout. For instance—the hand-lettering might be taken from the one-column cut: a striking silhouette might be taken from the two-column cut; a small head of the heroine might be taken from the three-column cut; a small head might be taken from the two-column cut, and a skyline outline from the seven-column cut might offer two inches of striking display material to be used in the one-column cut. But this, of course, is an extreme example.

Countless other examples might be given of possible uses of the cut material available for the feature photoplay; but these make other uses evident. It should be remembered, also, that cuts can be cut with diagonal lines or striking corners, or used with panels, rules, etc., either to connect or to set off different display elements.

Evidently, as far as illustration is concerned, the main problem of the theatre advertiser is one of selection. He has a wide variety of possibilities. Careful study of available material as illustrated in the press sheet, keeping in mind the size and shape of layout generally used by the theatre, will reveal these possibilities.

These uses of the standard cuts involve no extra expense. The printer or newspaper compositor will mortise away unnecessary parts. It is often only a matter of straight sawing and the use of a file; new etching is not necessary.

Cut Files.

Used mats and electros can be returned and filed. Then you have a supply on hand for any emergency in case the exchange cannot furnish material in time. Besides, if the avail-

able material does not satisfy, you might find something much better in your own file. This file costs nothing, yet it is an asset at any theatre especially in an emergency.

Variety.

Do not use the same monotonous combination of cuts, display type, body type, shape and size in all your advertisements. Try to make each new display a little different, and yet follow a certain form which makes it recognizable as of a particular theatre. In striving for variety you can at times omit a cut and use all type, or run an open letter occasionally for an exceptional program, or use many of the other novelty advertisements suggested in the chapter, "Novelty Advertisements."

Newspaper Reproduction.

There are definite limitations of type and paper in newspaper reproductions. Do not study advertisements as they appear in magazines on gloss paper and expect that you can get the same results on coarse newspaper stock. Keep in mind these limitations. Avoid cuts and types so small in detail that satisfactory reproduction on a newspaper page is impossible. Avoid cluttered-up backgrounds that will only appear as a smudge on the newspaper page. Avoid eccentric and elaborate illustrations and decorations. Avoid a jumble of many different type faces. Avoid too many units in any one layout, because these give a disorganized, or, at least, a polka-dot effect, unless arranged by a master hand. Drop every unnecessary detail, not so much because it may mean saving a few pennies on the space used, but because the cluttered-up advertisement does not invite reading. If, because of "art for art's sake," you still persist in using a staff "artist" rather than the standard materials, try to convince him that nothing is more effective than black type against white background. Coax him to handle engraving tricks rarely. Beg him not to fog up your advertisement with too many Bendey backgrounds. Urge him not to use line upon line of hand-lettering, because the standard type faces are more legible. When you appraise his work, study it not as it appears engraved on the clear white background of the bristol-board, but as the tired eyes of uninterested people meet it on the amusement page.

Quality.

Every theatre advertisement should be representative of the quality of the institution for which it speaks. Appearances help—or hinder. An inviting display helps to sell, independently of the copy. The careless newspaper advertisement reflects as much discredit on a theatre as poor projection, slovenly ushers, a dirty marquee or an unswept lobby. The reader may not know technically why a particular advertisement is poor. He merely gets the impression from a slovenly advertisement that the theatre is not good because the advertising display is not good. Quality should be the latent message of your advertising. Quality is more often associated with simplicity and order than with elaborateness and disorder. When you aim for simplicity . . . your focus is set straight for quality.

CHAPTER XXIII

COPY

THE term "copy" has been applied, first, to the paper from which the compositor works; secondly, to include all elements of the layout, not only words, but illustration, border and other display elements; thirdly, to the words or text as distinct from the illustration and other display units.

Copy here refers to the wording or to the text. The theatre advertiser's problem, as far as copy is concerned, includes both copy for the advertisement, copy for the amusement page reading notice, and copy for imprint space on heralds and other advertising mediums.

Certain principles of copy apply primarily to the newspaper advertisement, but no distinction is made in discussing these principles in this chapter.

As the artist sells with an illustration telling a story, or an idea with pictures, so does copy sell with words in type.

As far as the theatre advertisement is concerned, the illustration generally serves only to attract attention. It is the copy that sells. However, copy and display are both units of one thing. There should be no separation. It is not a matter of framing a layout and then sticking in words; nor is it a matter of lining up words and then searching around for a frame of border and display.

Obviously, effective copy is effective only when it sells. No matter how elegant, or how clever, or how nicely phrased copy may be, if it does not sell it is *not* effective.

Understanding.

Effective copy—that gets results—can be written only when the writer understands both the product and those to whom he is writing. Understanding the product is a matter of thought and analysis. Understanding the reader means getting his viewpoint so that those points will be discussed which will interest most; secondly, using words that he can understand better than any other language; thirdly, shaping that language so it will interest and convince.

Selection.

As far as the theatre advertiser is concerned, copy is first of all a matter of selection. Press sheets and other publicity material will give sufficient information and very often effective copy. But from all the information and copy that is offered, it remains for the advertiser to select what will be most effective for his particular readers. It must be remembered that the press sheet is prepared for national use. It is evident that no one can write copy which will be equally effective everywhere. Effectiveness depends upon phrasing a selling point so that it will be understood locally. Now and then copy can be lifted directly from the press sheet and used without change. But usually it needs some adaptation for local use and local space requirements. It is no reflection on the copy writers of the press sheet that sometimes change is necessary because of local conditions; nor is it fair to say that press sheets are written with the New York viewpoint. A serious attempt is made to have press-sheet copy as close to general use as is possible. But if people differ locally, and they do, then a press sheet would have to have every variety of copy to suit every condition; such is evidently impossible. The theatre advertiser who understands his prospects best, other things being equal, will write the most effective copy.

Your Product.

Understand thoroughly what you are selling—your theatre and the program. The exhibitor who advertised the photoplay, Ibsen's "Doll House," with a line, "Be sure and bring the children," did not understand what he was selling. Understanding what you are selling means that you realize that every photoplay is different and that the more distinctive you can make your copy the better. In other words, generalized copy which might be applied equally well to any photoplay is not effective. Consequently, copy like the following is not

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advocated: "A great romance of love and thrills," "An exceptional photoplay glorifying romance," "A photoplay in which the hero after many struggles wins the heroine," "A drama of the great open spaces with action, thrills and excitement." This copy, or a good part of it, could be applied to almost any photoplay. The italicized words show how many instances there are of ineffective wording. Generalized copy was found in 78 per cent of over 1,000 theatre advertisements recently examined.

Brevity.

Every word counts. The newspaper reader is busy, and long lines of selling type only frighten him away. Cut your message to the bone. Drop every unnecessary word. Use short sentences. If you cannot sell a prospect with the first fifty words, it is not likely that he will be around listening when you reach the 450th word. Unnecessary words—every one of them—cost just so much in terms of newspaper space. Unnecessary words waste your time, the reader's time—and your money.

The Headline.

The title itself, if exceptional, may sell some prospects independently of any copy, but generally it only wins attention to your advertisement. The title may be used as a headline: but when the title is not strong enough to get attention, and when the illustration does no more than win attention, selling depends on the headline and your text. The advertisement headline has a different purpose than the newspaper page headline. The latter is generally only a convenience for the reader, indicating the material of the story beneath. The advertisement headline has another, different purpose—that is, to win the reader's attention and develop interest which will lead on to the copy. Therefore, the more closely there is a sequence of thought between the headline and the following copy, the better. You can get attention for a headline with some startling statement, but if it has no connection with the copy that follows, the reader feels tricked and is not likely to follow through the copy. Therefore, the purpose of the headline is not only to win attention—and, incidentally, research shows that headlines win attention in a ratio of 40 to 60 compared with illustrations—but to make the interest of attention so intense, that the reader is naturally brought on to the copy. It is a springboard which sends the reader right into the copy before he can stop moving.

The headline is limited to about five words. It may be in the form of a question. It may be a command. It may be an exclamation. It may be a simple statement of an interesting fact. It may even be the introduction to a testimonial such as "At last the critics agree . . ." or "Five women of Blanktown say . . ." The press sheet often carries most effective headlines. If not, compose your own.

Your Readers.

When you use words to express thoughts you are playing on the minds of your readers in the sense that if any word used is unfamiliar to the reader, you strike only a dead key. The average reader has a limited vocabulary. When you use words that the reader does not understand you are wasting space. It is not a question of whether you understand the copy. Your purpose is to have someone else understand it. You may feel very proud of a sparkle like "the sophisticated cosmopolite" or "the ecstatic rhapsodies of a frenzied artiste in . . . " or "the intriguing machinations of a continental paramour," etc. If your readers do not understand, you have paid for space to exploit your own knowledge. Your pride costs just so much per line or per inch in newspaper rates. You can talk the language of your readers only when you feel that you are one of them. To be one of them you must know their thoughts and live their lives and be as close to them as you possibly can. You might have taken the phrase "sophisticated cosmopolite" from a press sheet. Its use there should not justify your use of it. For a Park Avenue theatre this wording might have been effective—that is, if every prospect of that theatre understood. It may be effective elsewhere. But is it effective for you? You cannot be too simple. Do not embroider fancy adjectives and hang high-sounding words on your copy or smear it over with six-syllable "bunk." It is harder to write simple copy and *Copy* 295

effective copy than it is to write fancy, elaborate copy. All you need for the latter is dictionaries—and they are cheap. What you need for the former is an understanding of human nature and a fund of common sense, and this cannot be picked up at a corner book store.

Interest.

It is one thing to have the reader understand your words. It is another thing to interest and convince the reader. Interest depends very much on what can be called the "tone" of your copy. You are selling excitement, fun, entertainment, and pleasure. It should be easier for you to write interesting copy than it is for the advertiser who is selling monkey wrenches or lubricating oil. Yet many a time the advertiser of these latter products will put more interest and more humannature appeal into his text than will the advertiser who has to sell the most interesting thing that is sold—entertainment.

"You" Copy.

Interest is seldom won completely by advertising impersonally, such as "It is a photoplay of the Western Prairie." Use what is called "you" copy. This copy talks in a personal way to the reader and makes him feel that he is a part of the message. For instance, "You will feel yourself swept along the spaces of the Western Prairie." Notice how the words, "You will feel yourself swept along," because of that personal touch, develop more interest than the first example of impersonal copy. Of course, this is a flat example and a brief one, used only to indicate the difference of the style advocated. If you write as though you were talking with enthusiasm and personal interest to one of your friends, you will come nearer to effectiveness, than if you feel that you are writing an essay for some high-brow professor to blue-pencil. Write as though you were looking your reader in the eye and could give to your message the personal touch of a smile, a wink of the eye, a pat on the back, and a handshake. Feel your reader's response as you go on. See his face—don't look at a blank page. Forget the pencil. Talk!

Conviction.

Convincing the busy reader in the very short space of an advertisement is difficult. Usually you can only whet an appetite or develop a curiosity. You have no room to convince with so-called "arguments." If you try to say too much, curiosity is satisfied and patrons won't buy tickets to feel suspense or because of a curiosity which you have already satisfied.

Remember that many readers are not regular fans. The regular fan no doubt knows about the coming attraction from the house program or the screen trailer—and knows more than you can tell in a newspaper advertisement. The prospects you are aiming at include those who seldom buy a theatre ticket and would not buy if they were not sold by this particular advertisement. A large percentage of your profit from the newspaper advertisement lies in selling those who were not already sold on a particular program but whom you can persuade to come.

Exaggeration.

Conviction does not depend on noisy, boasting, exaggerated statements. Superlatives are easy to write. A complete supply is available in any dictionary. Skill is not required to set down such exaggerations as the following: "The most stupendous production of the season," "The greatest photoplay ever made," "The photoplay that has made moving picture history," "The greatest cast that ever appeared," "The screen's leading masterpiece," "Acclaimed by critics unanimously," "The greatest picture since 'The Birth of a Nation'," "The most wonderful screen play ever produced." These are a few samples from a list of 1,376 meaningless exaggregations collected from amusement pages of the country during one month.

Now, it may be that a particular picture deserves superlatives. But, even then, superlatives have been so worn out on inferior photoplays that, even for the exceptional photoplay, it would be wiser to use something else. People are not convinced by brag and exaggeration, especially if previous expe-

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rience with the reality did not live up to the exaggerations of advertising. The frank reader, after passing through glittering, noisy exaggeration will either say "Brag" or use a short and ugly word. You can fool people once in a while. If you sell only "once in a while" you might "get away" with exaggeration. When you are selling to the same people week in and week out, avoid exaggeration, which is meaningless. Make your copy exact and reliable and selling will be easier.

Information.

Much advertising of familiar products other than theatre programs serves a reminder purpose. If a product is advertised unchanged over a long period of time, the last piece of copy can presuppose that readers already know much about the product. But at the average motion-picture theatre the product is changed at least once a week. Therefore, newspaper advertising is generally informative rather than reminder. Your purpose is to inform. Readers want a simple answer to questions of what, who, when, and where. If, after reading your copy, they do not know the kind of photoplay you are showing, even if you have called it "The best and the greatest ever made," your space has been wasted. If they do not know the play-date, although you have convinced them that they should see a certain program at your theatre, that space is wasted. If they know the play-date and have been convinced that they should see a particular photoplay, and you have left out the theatre name or obscured it, you get no return at your theatre for that use of space. Therefore, the more serviceable you make your copy, the better. That is why occasionally some theatre advertisers mention even starting hours of programs, and occasionally give the theatre location, even suggesting transportation routes, and also indicate prices where a particular price scale is not only a distinctive selling point, but information that readers will appreciate as a service.

Feminine Appeal

The majority of motion picture theatre patrons are women. Many men attend a particular theatre because of the preference of women friends. Therefore, if you are selling to prospects the majority of whom are women, give your copy a feminine appeal. This refers not only to the selection of the particular selling point written about but also to the choice of words. (Consult pages 111-113.) Man-made copy for women buyers is often crude, blunt and heavy. A sale can be made by tickling just as well as by punching and bludgeoning. Delicate, neat, curiosity-provoking copy is often chosen because of its effectiveness with women readers.

Trade Terms.

Do not use technical trade terms in writing for your public. Such phrases as specials, fade-outs, seven-reelers, one of the ". . ." group, pre-release, a road-show picture, etc., are not generally understood. You know what the trade terms mean. If your readers do not, you are only wasting space and money.

Timeliness.

Very often familiar local phrases and timely reference to local events add interest to your copy. The headline which ties in with an event of particular local interest, and copy brightened with phrases which have a bearing on that event are effective because of their local appeal. Local holidays also suggest timely headlines and copy which will be effective because timely. This is something which requires local application and naturally cannot be expected in the general press sheet copy. Incidentally, a slang phrase that is not offensive but is really dripping with meaning is appropriate. This is not a plea for slang, but practical common sense makes it evident that stiffly formal language has little place in theatre advertising. Language can be crisp and snappy and yet not offensive. If an expression is not in the dictionary—what of it? If your readers understand the expression and it does not offend, use that expression. Consider the expression, "Hot dog." This expresses more than many long, high-sounding words. So talk the language of your people. Whether your language is effective is indicated not by the blue pencil of a blue-stockinged professor, but by the tired arm of the ticket-taker of your theatre. That's a sure sign your copy is effective.

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Appropriateness.

Evidently the very type and appeal of some photoplays requires that your copy carry the spirit of the production. Thus slang expressions or informal language for a production like "The Ten Commandments," or "Ben Hur," or "Michael Strogoff" are evidently inappropriate. Just as copy must be gauged according to the particular type of prospect by whom it will be read, so, too, it must be gauged according to the tone of the program which you advertise.

Occasional Copy.

It is occasionally necessary not to sell the advantages of a particular program but rather to sell the general idea that entertainment is necessary. For instance, during Greater Movie Season, when the theatre is making a special drive for theatre attendance, rather than a drive for attendance at a particular program, a certain type of copy is necessary. Nothing better can be suggested as the tone for this occasional copy than that carried in the well-known Paramount National advertising series. Excerpts from this series are given here in abbreviated form:

- 1. The Tonic Value of Motion Pictures.—Your heart action literally increases, and at intense moments your spine seems to change temperature rapidly, at the will of the play—hot and cold! Pictures take millions of people "out of themselves" every week. This wonderful trip is yours for the taking any time.
- 2. Friendship Means More at the Movies.—To enjoy a great show with one you care about very much is one of life's greatest pleasures. Some of the magic art of the photoplay attaches itself to your comradeship, and each of you seems a little more wonderful to the other. There are pictures that have smoothed out quarrels and tiffs, showing by proxy the better way.
- 3. Make More of Your Life with Movies.—You have a schedule of work, get a schedule of play. Don't let life cheat you of the hours that thrill! They are the silver lining of the clouds of either dishwashing or business worries. All of us, rich or poor, with smooth hands or rough, have a right to a certain amount of healthy excitement, every day that dawns—to entertainment—to adventure—to the thrill of swift happenings that show the life of men and women in the most vivid and stimulating phases. Modern work contains an over-proportion of routine. You fall spiritually sick unless you balance it with modern play-moving pictures.

- 4. The Blazed Trail of Romance.—The human soul contains a passion for life, for fairness, for beauty, for progress, for love, for adventure, as well as for less fine things, but the big thing is that the good side won't be drowned! The good in us will win, but the fight's terrific—and there's the plot of a million great plays. A show can make souls grow as well as thrill to the uttermost.
- 5. Keeping the Family Alive.—An endless chain of happy evenings! That's what keeps the family alive. It does not matter which evenings in the week you go, as long as you don't let the family go separate ways. Get them together tonight and come to the theatre.
- 6. Keeping the Family Together.—Keeping the family together doesn't mean keeping the family home every night. Home is a great place to come back to, as any woman can tell any man, or any youngster tell any parents. The family that knows enough to go to great photoplays together has learned one of the secrets of lasting family happiness.
- All Dressed Up and Some Place to Go.—A place that may be the white snows of Alaska or the white sands of Florida. Green valleys or Rocky Mountains, Broadway at noon or a farmhouse at midnight. Or all of them! A place where you may be a pirate, cowboy, or aviator, having terrific adventures in forest, sea or air. In one evening have the thrill of all the deeds you've ever dreamt of! A few steps from home.
 What Are You Doing Tonight?—Then how'd you like to do a
- 8. What Are You Doing Tonight?—Then how'd you like to do a society stunt, associating with limousines, lords, and pearl necklaces on a free and equal footing? Or take a fling at being a Wall Street King, playing with railroads and millions like toys and pennies? Or help clean up a gang of Western bandits, in a sharp flurry of mustangs, masks and sixshooters?
- 9. And There You'll Find Your Old Sweetheart Again.—Comedrop that newspaper for tonight! Maybe she's tired of a paper wall and silence and the width of a lighted table between you. Maybe she's thinking of those other evenings when you sat next each other—and there were no lights. Come—forget the news for once. Take her to a theatre where any time you go you'll see a picture worthy of your best and finest moods. How long since you sat that way together? Habit has built a wall of commonplaces. You sit on opposite sides of a table—and read newspapers, or pore over bills. But here . . . there is no table between you. No light to disclose harsh realities. You sit close, side by side, and maybe your hands touch. You are learning how to be lovers again, from fleeting lights and shadows that move across the screen! And as that unconscious hard crust of life is melted by the kindly warmth of a finer, tender feeling you glance at each other and see—no, not brows knit with the problems and plans of to-day and to-morrow—but only the shy young girl and strong, romantic youth of those other bygone days and their never-to-be-forgotten sweetness. You have found your old sweetheart again.

Enthusiasm.

No matter how long and how carefully you work on your copy, if you lack enthusiasm it will not get results. Copy is not

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something that only the highly educated can write. Real copy comes from one who is enthused. So of all effective writing. It is usually not the college professor in a comfortable library chair with nothing to worry about who writes—and gets results. If many of them could get results they would not be professors. Effective writing does not depend on a fancy education. A college degree—even a list of degrees which looks like half the alphabet—does not make a writer. Literary taste is one thing; power to write is another, an altogether different, thing.

Of course, a knowledge of technical language devices is very helpful—but it is not everything, not half of it. Great writing has been done by "roughnecks"—and the professors put in the punctuation, perhaps, or corrected the spelling, or more likely raved about the "masterpiece" after the "roughneck" was buried. When a man has a real message, when he loves hard, or hates hard, or fears hard—when his enthusiasm is just exploding—he writes in a way that makes the readers yell "Hurrah" or "I want to buy one." Consequently, effective copy is not a matter of searching for words and embroidering them on paper. The words come fast and true when enthusiasm bursts into a message.

So, if you are not warmed up hot with enthusiasm for what you are selling, don't play with cold words. If you go feeling for fancy words before you are bursting with the message, the result will be—just words.

CHAPTER XXIV

ARRANGING YOUR LAYOUT

ARRANGING the layout, as discussed here, is a matter of, first, how instructions should go to the printer or to the composing room of the newspaper; secondly, the order of steps that can be generally followed. Instructions should show the position of borders, panels, display type, illustrations, slugs, etc. They should also specify type size, type face, and position and setting of body type.

As far as preparation of layout is concerned, some few principles can be consciously applied; but the preparation of a layout is in good part a creative work for which individual ingenuity is responsible. It cannot be machinemade.

Exact technical and mechanical knowledge is one thing; spirit and enthusiasm are another. The technically accurate layout will never be completely effective unless it carries some of the spirit and enthusiasm of the one who prepared it. Technical arrangement is only the wire, and the vital spark is individual enthusiasm.

The main preliminary in preparing any layout is to approach a particular program with eagerness and enthusiasm. Do not get bored by seeing too many photoplays. Do not feel that a particular program, because it does not delight you, will not please others. Without enthusiasm any layout is cold. Selling depends upon warmth. So, first work yourself up to a pitch of enthusiasm—and then begin.

Preliminary.

You cannot be reasonably convinced that you have something worth selling until you have mastered the program by reading the press sheet and other available sources of information. Of course you have analyzed your community and you have selected that distinctive appeal for a particular program which is the most effective appeal which could be selected

for those of your prospects who will be reached by this particular layout.

Determine how other mediums of advertising have given a certain understanding of what you are selling. A newspaper advertisement alone, without any other advertising, cannot sell all the possible prospects. If a full-page newspaper advertisement were to be read carefully by every possible prospect, the importance of supplementary advertising would not be as great But this will never be the fact. Your space is limited. You can only do so much.

There are two layouts possible: the directory advertisement, and the display advertisement. The directory advertisement carries only the name of the theatre, play-date, names of program units. Obviously this serves only a reminder purpose and can seldom sell to those who have not been sold by some other medium. How can the mere statement of title and star be expected to do very much selling, inasmuch as titles generally give but a meager idea of the real high-lights and entertainment value of a production?

The display advertisement is considered here.

Having determined the proportion of your advertisement in main outline, what comes first? It is impossible to analyze the creative spirit. Perhaps the headline comes first. Perhaps it comes last. But no matter what mental processes you follow you always keep in mind the purpose of a particular layout by remembering such things as: What am I selling? Why am I selling it? To whom is my selling directed? What do they already know? What details will help to determine their purchase?

Assemble Material.

First, assemble your material—that includes the standard material such as type faces, borders, the theatre signature plate, available at the local newspaper composing room or at the local print shop; secondly, the cut material as illustrated in the press sheet—illustrations, hand-lettering, and perhaps decorative border. Knowing in general outline the space your advertisement will occupy, you have gone through this

material to select the cut or the parts of cuts that are best suited to your purpose.

Of course, this material must be ordered well in advance to insure delivery. You order mats or electros according to the equipment at the local plant and according to the type of illustrations you will use, applying principles explained on pages 267, 268, 285-290.

Space.

Having first determined the material to be used, you lay out your space. Remember in this connection the column size of the particular newspaper you will use. Newspaper columns vary from 12 to $13\frac{1}{2}$ ems in width. The 12-em standard was adopted during the World War. Up to that time 13 or $13\frac{1}{2}$ -em width was standard. Most newspapers still hold to the 12-em width, others do not—385 newspapers use 12-em column width, 381 use $12\frac{1}{2}$ -em, 856 use 13-em. In figuring your space, remember that columns are separated by column rules to prevent the type lines from running together. This is a separation of one em. Sometimes this separation is effected by a narrow line down the page; sometimes only white space is used.

If your layout occupies more than one-column width, you are given this one em extra width. Thus, if the newspaper uses the 12-em column, your two-column space is 25 instead of 24 ems wide, and your three-column space is 38 instead of 36 ems wide.

Space is purchased by the inch or the line. Most of the city newspapers use line rate. The country papers sell by the inch. A "line" is the agate line, running 14 lines to the inch, so that the "line" is one-fourteenth of an inch. This gives a method of marking your size. If you want three columns 10 inches deep, you do not mark it 30 inches or 43-em 420 lines; you mark it either three tens or 140x3. Find out just how your newspaper marks space and follow that marking.

Choose clean white paper for your layout. The more neatly and the more accurately you specify what you want, the more likely it is that you will get it. If you send in a carelessly prepared layout on butcher paper, the chances are that your care-

lessness will give the impression that you are not particular about the results. In some cases newspapers will supply sheets for layout purposes, ruled to indicate column and em measurement.

Having decided on the general shape of your advertisement, according to principles indicated on page 279, make an outline on your sheet precisely the size of your layout. A printer's rule to measure picas and agate lines will be helpful. This can be secured at a very small cost. The thin outline indicates the limits of your width. Allow space for the newspaper to fit in a hairline rule if it is likely your advertisement will be run so close to others that it will be "squeezed."

Border.

If you first determine your border outline, make a line with a soft pencil around the sides and indicate the width and the shape of the border. Your whole drawn line indicates the shape. The style of border is indicated by using the border number for the particular border you want as set down in the newspaper's type book or type sheet. It is best to cut a small sample of the border you want and paste an inch or two of this on to your space to make certain that you will get just what you want.

Name Plate.

The theatre name plate is set into place by pasting a clipping of it from a former advertisement. Obviously the name plate can either be at the top or at the bottom of a layout, depending on whether it is to be your "letterhead" or your "signature." Do not bury your name plate in a mass of type. Let it stand out. You are interested in having patrons visit your theatre; you are not interested in selling a particular program unless the sale is for your theatre. Therefore, display the name plate properly.

Illustration.

Where shall you put the illustration? Of course, that depends upon the nature of the illustration and the balance towards which you are working. Remember in this connection

the principles explained on pages 279, 283, and 285. You indicate the position of the illustration by cutting out the part of the illustration you will use as it appears in the press sheet. Paste this carefully on the layout, so that it will be turned exactly as you want it. In this connection recall Focal Point, Movement, Illustration, pages 280, 282, and 283-287.

Do not cut the mat or the electro. Mark on the mat or the electro a letter corresponding to the letter on the pasted clipping of that particular cut or part of the cut which you have placed on your layout. Show on the press book proof just what you want to use and send that along even if you use only a part of a cut.

Title.

Sometimes the cut will carry the photoplay title, so that the title and the illustration are one piece. If not, it may be necessary to cut the title from the illustration of another cut, or to cut the title from the illustration of the same cut which you have already used. If the title is separated from the illustration, put a letter on this as it appears on your layout and a corresponding letter on the mat with your particular piece of art work. If display type will be used for title, letter this in on your layout with pencil, indicating approximate size of type and its position. Then specify type face, type size, etc.

As far as position of title is concerned, confer pages 292 and 293.

Trade Mark.

The producer-distributor trade-mark, if it has a selling value in your community, deserves a place in the display advertisement. This does not mean that your layout should necessarily begin with the statement, "The Preferred Entertainment Company, Inc.—J. J. Smith, President; W. W. Brown, Vice-President—Presents . . ." It only means that the small trade-mark emblem or the small line of letter type which is available on cuts be included. This ties in the theatre with the national advertising of a well-known product. It makes it possible to attract to your theatre those who are already sold on the general quality of a particular brand of pictures.

The very small space required for this display is more than paid for by the result it will get you. Very often this small display helps you give effective balance to a layout. It is indicated on your layout by pasting on the emblem or lettering from the press sheet cut. Letter this and give a corresponding letter to the material as it appears on the cut.

Headline.

It may be that the photoplay title is so attractive and interest-winning that it takes the place of a headline; but, generally, a striking headline is necessary, either to win attention for the advertisement when the illustration is not alone effective enough to do this, or, if the illustration has won attention, the headline can serve to bring that attention on to interest and lead into the selling text. The press sheet gives a variety of striking headlines. Select the one that will be most suited for your prospects, and which will tie-up most easily with your selling text. If you can think of a more timely headline or something that would be more effective locally, do so, applying what was indicated on pages 291 and 293. Display types available at the newspaper office can be used for your headline. just as display type can be used for the title if a hand-lettered title does not suit your space or the general proportions of the layout. With pencil, letter in your headline on the layout. indicating approximate size of type and position. Then specify type face, type size, etc. Use upper and lower case. Have plenty of white space to make headline stand out. If a double line is used, break the lines to indicate the sense.

Play-Date.

The plate-date is important. The position of this depends on the general shape of the layout. However, it is most effectively placed near the theatre slug. Play-date means specific days—"Tuesday and Wednesday"—and does not mean "Today and To-morrow." "To-day" may be yesterday when the advertisement is read. "To-morrow" never comes. Make your play day announcement definite. Letter in the wording and then specify type size and type face.

Program Units.

At the bottom of your layout space insert supporting features—the comedy, the news reel, orchestra or organ, etc. In this case, name the comedy. The mere word "Comedy" does very little selling. In the same space an interesting comedy title would be much more effective. Do not use the mere words, "News Reel." Practically every theatre has a news reel. You might as well advertise "Also a screen" as to advertise "Also a news reel." The trade name of a particular news reel may have selling value. If it has, use that name. It may be that the news reel carries some outstanding event of local interest. Mention that fact. Letter-in your announcement and specify type size and type face.

In larger spaces the "corner cuts" supplied by many distributors of short subjects can be used to good advantage. An attractive comedy title will often sell seats when the feature would not.

Text.

Now you have specified title, illustrations, perhaps a headline, the theatre slug, play-date and supporting features, and located type position and specified type size and type face. There remains the selling text. This is the most important item. The text is what makes the sale. As far as preparation of copy is concerned, refer to pages 291-293. When your copy is written, indicate with lines on the layout the position this copy should occupy. These pencil lines for text position should be set as far apart as required for the type face and type size used.

It is better to typewrite your copy on a separate sheet and mark it with a number or letter corresponding to the number marked on the body type lines which only indicate where this copy should be set. Indicate type size and style of type you want; also indicate, if necessary, initial, caps, italics, bold-face, etc. Most offices set by machine. Unless you indicate the style of type, the result may be unsatisfactory. For instance, if the linotype man has a Cheltenham magazine on the machine, he is apt to give you Cheltenham where Ludlow should have

been set. The man who sets another size type may have a Goudy on his machine, and he will give you Goudy of the proper size but the wrong style. Thus, if you have three or four type inserts, and do not specify the type face wanted, you will get a display that would not be as effective as if a single face or related faces had been used. Consequently, specify clearly the type face you want; specify type size as well.

Type Space.

With a little practice you will readily come to know how many lines of type a certain number of words will require in a certain width. Leave room for the compositor to move around; that is, do not be too rigid in specifying so much type or so much space. If you want your type to be paneled in with a rule, mark it to that effect—for instance, "12-em lines in a 16-em panel of 176 rule"—or whatever the rule or panel size required.

As far as the number of words to the square inch is concerned, an approximate table can be used. The length of words varies, and consequently no table will be any more than an approximation. Besides, the square inch of some types will hold more than the square inch of other types. You can have your own square inch measure prepared for the styles of type generally used in the body of your advertisements. However, the following table is suggested:

Words to Square Inch.

5	Point.	Solid	69
5	Point,	1 Point Leaded	59
51	/2 Poir	nt, Solid	54
		nt, 2 Point Leaded	45
		Solid	47
		2 Point Leaded	34
		Solid	32
		2 Point Leaded	23
		Solid	21
		2 Point Leaded	16
		Solid	14
		2 Point Leaded	111/2
		Solid	10
		2 Point Leaded	9
	,		

Indicate "leading out" required for particular lines. Allow plenty of white space. Leave your text open and inviting. If you use panels, do not pack them with type.

Review.

Now look over the entire layout in every detail to see that there is no omission. Then check up on unnecessary details and eliminate what is absolutely unnecessary. Then review your layout according to balance, movement, surrounding material, position of illustration, contrast, climax, etc.

It is obvious that layouts cannot be prepared by any machine-made formula; nor can any set procedure be given to be applied in any rule-of-thumb way. The layout is a unit. Every element from headline to illustration, from border to text, should all co-operate to give one outstanding impression and move to one climax. Consequently, no individual details will overshadow others unless to lead to climax. Evidently units can be shifted about until a satisfactory arrangement is secured.

The Compositor.

The sooner your layout-specifications get to the office, the better. This will give you time to get proof that can be read and corrected. Corrections will be heeded if you handle the matter tactfully. Do not get the reputation of being a kicker. When an error occurs in the proof, and the fault is yours, admit it. Cultivate the friendship of the men in the composing room. Ask their advice. Do not give the impression that you know it all. On the other hand, do not let them talk you into type styles which are easier for them, but less effective for you. If you mark type for display and they give you all caps roman from the machine, your objection is justified; but if there is not much difference between what they have given you and what you have specified, do not argue. Be willing, for instance, to accept machine display line rather than call for hand setting, except in exceptional instances.

In general, be eager to learn. Ask for ideas. Get the compositor interested in your work. If you specify every detail, the compositor will usually feel that you know what you are about; but remember that if ill-will is once developed, you have a serious problem. Good-will is your strongest asset here. For instance, with a hurried layout you might neglect to include necessary information, such as play date, or theatre name slug, or even title; that has happened. The alert and friendly compositor will call it to your attention. If you have created the impression that you know it all, your mistake will appear right on the page. The more you know about the compositor's work and his problems, the better. Compositors at one newspaper are still laughing at a theatre manager who asked that his advertisement be set in red ink and would not listen to reasons why this was not practicable.

Correcting Proof.

In correcting newspaper proofs use the symbols followed by the particular paper. Mark no changes directly on the copy, but rather on the margin of the layout or the margin of the copy. You can get examples of proof-reading symbols such as those followed by your newspaper compositor.

If you are using the same advertisement in several newspapers, here is a helpful hint: Send your original layout to one newspaper which excels in composition; get extra proofs from that office. The corrected proofs can then be sent to the other papers. The advantages are that extra copies of your layout need not be made by you; and, secondly, the excellent composition will serve as a guide for the other newspapers.

Common Mistakes in Theatre Advertisements.

- 1. Omission of necessary details such as title, theatre name, play date. (At least one of these omissions occurred in 41 advertisements out of 500 carried on amusement pages during a particular week.)
- 2. The use of unnecessary detail—for example, background and unnecessary material on mats which should have been cut away. (One issue of 500 newspapers was studied and the amount of space used for unnecessary material on cuts, calculated at the rate per inch or line of each particular paper, amounted to approximately \$15,000.00.)
- 3. Not enough white space.

- 4. Too heavy a border, which nullifies the influence of display material within the layout.
- Inside rules which cut the layout into sections, giving the impression of many advertisements instead of a unified impression, and placing obstacles to the progress of the reader.
- 6. Type set off line in vertical panels, requiring the reader to read up rather than along the line.
- 7. Copy that was untruthful, meaningless, exaggerated.
- 8. Unnecessary words in copy that could have been cut down to improve the effect.
- 9. The absence of feminine appeal in copy.
- 10. Making conspicuous a sales point which was not locally popular.
- 11. Lack of balance.
- 12. Hand-lettered layout with large areas of white on black which was not legible.
- 13. No contrast between a particular advertisement and surrounding advertisements because surrounding material was not considered in the arrangement of the layout.
- 14. Failure to use gutter space to enhance advertisement because heavy borders were used.
- 15. No variety in display units to give proper emphasis.
- 16. Too many distinctly different type faces used.
- Square, boxy layout when more effective shape might have been used.
- 18. Too much type or too small a type to be easily legible.

CHAPTER XXV

NOVELTY ADVERTISEMENTS

THE directory advertisement and the display advertisement with its headline, illustration, copy, theatre name, and playdate, become so familiar, that it is advisable to occasionally use a novelty advertisement which, because it is unfamiliar, will have more attention value and will more likely be read. There are many varieties of novelty theatre advertisements. They can be grouped here for convenience under the headings "Teaser Advertisements," Scatter Advertisements," "Endorsement and Open Letter Advertisements," and others.

Teaser Advertisements.—The teaser advertisement should be used in advance of all other advertising. Its object is to arouse interest and curiosity so that when the final announcement is made and the "secret" is revealed, the impression created will be deeper. Because the teaser campaign is sensational in style, it is not appropriate for every type of photoplay. If teaser campaigns are used too often, they lose their value because interest and curiosity are lessened when people suspect that the "mystery" campaign is "just another motion-picture theatre stunt."

Of course, the teaser campaign can be used in newspapers, on the screen, on posters, in the lobby, with direct mailing, and with throw-aways. The value of the campaign lies in the cumulative effect of repeated "teaser messages."

As far as the newspaper teaser is concerned it is not advisable to use too much copy. Copy can be selected according to the title, and also according to the locale or the theme, or even the featured players. The following examples suffice to illustrate teaser messages that have been used and suggest others:

- 1. (For the photoplay, "The Flirt")—"Wives, watch your husbands; I am coming to town.—The Flirt."
- 2. (For the photoplay, "Buried Treasure")—"You will find Buried Treasure in this town."

- 3. (For the photoplay, "The Shock")—"The Shock is coming"; and "Prepare now for The Shock."
- (For the photoplay, "Bachelor Daddies")—"Wanted
 —A young man to act as Bachelor Daddy to five
 children."
- 5. The use of a slogan (for the photoplay, "Three Musketeers")—"All for one and one for all."
- 6. The use of a mark, such as the mark used in "The Mark of Zorro."
- 7. The title printed in foreign languages.
- 8. Warnings, announcing the coming of a mystery character—a Raffles, a swindler, a vamp, etc., according to the theme of the photoplay.
- 9. The progressive teaser gives in each successive advertisement another letter of the title, until the complete series reveals the full title.
- 10. The progressive teaser can be used with details of the illustration—for instance, with a Chaplin photoplay, using in the first issue the shoes, in the next issue add the coat, in the next issue the derby, then the cane, etc., until the familiar figure is completed.
- 11. Another variation of the progressive teaser is to increase the size of the title or the illustration from microscopic detail to the regular size. This increase of size gives the impression that something is approaching.

Scatter Advertisements.

Their main purpose generally is to supplement the regular theatre advertisement. The most generally used size is one column over two. The scatter advertisements can appear on the amusement page, but preferably on the news pages. There is no limit to the variety of forms to be used. Title, theatre name, and play-date appear in each scatter advertisement.

The theme of the production often makes some page locations better than others for the scatter advertisement; for instance, a very effective position for the announcement of a matrimonial photoplay would be after the marriage licenses. Photoplays with a title like that of "Classified" and "Wanted—A Wife" suggest scatter advertisements on the want ad

pages of the newspaper. Scatter advertisements for society photoplays can be placed on the society page, and those for football, baseball, college life, and athletic photoplays can be placed most effectively on the sporting page.

The value of the scatter advertisement lies in the repetition of the message. The small scatter advertisement, because of its position, or because of place on a page usually not carrying theatre advertising, will win attention when the regular theatre announcement might be passed unnoticed.

The scatter advertisement can be used to call attention to the complete announcement in the regular theatre advertisement on the amusement page—for instance, "See the Gem Theatre ad on page 12."

The same layout and the same style of type helps to make the cumulative value of the repetition more effective. However, scatter announcements of the title, using a different style of type for each scatter advertisement, are effective.

Endorsements and Open Letter Advertisements.

The personal endorsement of a photoplay by a manager is effective if the manager's opinion is considered reliable in the community.

Of course, if the advertising of the theatre is generally exaggerated and untrue, the personal endorsement is worthless. If the manager has personally endorsed photoplays which did not satisfy patrons, his endorsement of a coming attraction will carry little weight. The personal endorsement advertisement should be used sparingly. It should be used when the manager is certain that his patrons will not be disappointed. This does not imply that it is limited to exceptional productions with powerful selling points. Some productions, because of title and a cast that is not outstanding, may be so far above average, and yet lacking in high-lights which can be appropriately advertised, that the manager's personal endorsement is really the most effective advertisement that could be used. It is evident that if the manager is new in the community, his personal endorsement will mean very little.

When a theatre's advertising has been reliable over a long period of time, the personal endorsement advertisement not

only attracts attention but really sells. Reliable advertising does not require that the manager condemn other photoplays. However, C. J. Latta, of the Empress Theatre, Shenandoah, Iowa, used a newspaper advertisement which prepared the way for his personal endorsement of other programs. An instance of this is seen in the following:

"AN APOLOGY AND A FAIR WARNING.—We endeavor to please at all times and are perfectly willing to admit our mistakes. It is impossible to see in advance every program we present. We must base our judgment of a production on the story, the author of the story, the producer, the director, and the cast. All of these were taken into consideration when we booked ————' for our showing yesterday and to-day, but, much to our disappointment, we feel it is one of the weakest pictures we have ever shown in Shenandoah. The balance of our program was up to standard, but we are not happy unless we have a 100 per cent program.

"'————' was taken from ——'s stirring novel,

'—— was taken from ——'s stirring novel,
'———,' one of the best sellers of the year. It
is a —— production, produced by the ——.

with two great stars in the cast.

"We thought this should make a splendid picture, and from the splendid patronage we had yesterday it is evidenced that you felt the same way. But it is just one of those cases that happens once in a while where a good story fails to make good screen material.

"We can only hope to succeed through good, clean, honest advertising, backed with the GOODS. This is one time we failed. We apologize and beg your pardon.

"We have no other program to substitute to-night; therefore, rather than have a dark house, we must finish
the engagement; but to those who have not seen
"------' we warn you that in our opinion it is
a very weak attraction. The International News Reel
is always good and our Comedy is unusually good;
so govern yourselves accordingly."

The discussion of whether or not announcements like the above are ever justified is not considered here. The example was given only to show how certain policies of theatre advertising can prepare the way for an added effectiveness to the

personal endorsement advertisement.

Form.

The personal endorsement advertisement follows the form of an open letter. The heading can be addressed to the patrons of the theatre, or to the people of the community. The text should be simple. There should be no exaggeration and no bombast. It is well to include a reference to certain details of cast and theme. However, the personal endorsement can be used without even mentioning the title, if the manager feels that his opinion of the program alone will attract patrons. A signature cut of the manager's name makes the advertisement more attractive. It is evident that the use of the theatre slug and the use of cuts is not necessary, but of course theatre name and play-date will be mentioned. By not using a standard cut the "open letter" advertisement wins more attention.

The personal endorsement can be directed to groups in the community by using headings like "TO THE SWEETHEARTS OF BLANKTOWN," "TO THOSE WHO ENJOY A GOOD LAUGH," etc.

Instead of his personal endorsement, the manager can sign a "confession." In this "confession" he states simply that over a period of years he has been writing copy for photoplays and has not found it very difficult to set down in print the entertainment value of the productions advertised. But in the case of (giving the name of the photoplay) he finds it impossible to master words which will give an indication of the merits, etc., of (here naming the photoplay, with cast, etc.), and ending with the suggestion that patrons come and see for themselves (theatre name and play-date) why it is impossible to adequately describe (name of photoplay). This advertisement would carry the manager's name. The familiar theatre slug and other cuts need not be used. A headline like "A Confession," or "I Can't Do It," or "Words Are Useless," or "No Man Could Tell—or Woman Either," etc., are suggested.

Series.

Very much like the endorsement advertisement is the series in which the names of prominent local personages are used to head the advertisements; for instance, advance advertising of an exceptional photoplay might be a series in which were included the mayor, the president of the woman's club, the president of the Rotary club, the college president, the leading merchant, a bank president, etc. Each advertisement of the series has three parts:

- 1. In large, boldface type, "If I were Mr. James T. Smith" (winning attention with this curiosity-provoking opening which carries the name of a well-known individual).
- 2. The text in 10- or 12-point type, which pays tribute to the position in the community occupied by the individual mentioned above, and then associating the individual's work with some phase of the photoplay discussed; then suggesting that attendance at the theatre to see (name of the photoplay) would be typical of the individual's desire to promote the general welfare.
- 3. Concluding in large, boldface type, "That's what I would do if I were Mr. James T. Smith."

Well-known names at the heading of such a series of advertisements will win attention. Interest grows as the series continues. Associating the theatre advertising with well-known leaders has an institutional value. Of course, the photoplay selected for this form of advertising should be one that would not cause resentment. It is advisable to have the approval of those whose names will be used in the series. However, because each advertisement pays a gracious tribute to the individual, such approval can be readily secured.

The following is a suggested layout for one of the series discussed here:

"If I Were Mr. James T. Smith-

As President of the Blanktown Chamber of Commerce whose members are devoting their time and energy to the development of this community, Mr. James T. Smith typifies the business leadership with which Blanktown is so favored.

Leadership like his should be appreciated. There is adventure, conquest and romance on every page of the annals of American history. The pioneers who founded our country are the inspiration of leaders like Mr. Smith.

So, if I were Mr. Smith, I would remind the members of the Chamber of Commerce that (name of photoplay) will be shown at (name of theatre and play-date). Here is a photoplay which every member of the Chamber of Commerce would be proud to have his family see. They would appreciate the timely reminder from Mr. Smith.

"That's What I Would Do if I Were Mr. James T. Smith."

A similar series is that in which each unit begins with an announcement which refers to one of the local newspapers; for instance, the headline, "IF I OWNED THE BLANK-TOWN GLOBE," is followed by a statement indicating that the newspaper's motion-picture critic (mentioning his name) would be advised to call particular attention to the outstanding features (naming these) of the photo-play shown (adding theatre name and play-date), and closing with the statement, "THAT'S WHAT I WOULD DO IF I OWNED THE BLANKTOWN GLOBE."

If the masthead of each newspaper can be used in the heading of such an announcement, its attention value is greater.

Another series can refer to groups in the community—for instance, the Rotarians, the school teachers, the police, the Kiwanians, the doctors, the lawyers, etc. In this series the heading of the announcement reads, for instance, "IF I WERE A ROTARIAN," and the remainder of the announcement associates some phase of Rotarian work with some phase of the photoplay advertised, closing with suggestions for theatre attendance to see the program which is discussed.

A series can be built-up with the headings "IF I WERE YOU," or "DID YOU HEAR," or "DO YOU KNOW," or "ISN'T IT TRUE," "EVERYBODY'S SAYING," "YOU'D BE SURPRISED," etc., using familiar, chatty, conversational copy advocating attendance, and commending the program or the theatre.

Quoting endorsements from prominent leaders who have attended previews, can be used in a series of endorsement advertisements. If there is no preview, comments of patrons can be used to build up an interesting series. In this case it is not necessary to use the patron's name. Names can be used by taking from the directory those names which are most frequently used, and then phrasing some comment which is interesting and not exaggerated; for instance, announcements beginning "Mrs. Jones says," or "Mrs. Smith says," cause no contradiction because so many of the same name live in the community. Each quotation should be conversational in tone and call attention to a particular high-light of the photo-play. Very often a series like this will prompt others to telephone their approval to the theatre, so that their names can be used in the series.

Excerpts from reviews can be used under the heading, "The Critics Write Our Ads."

Comments of members of the theatre staff can be used—for instance, the door-man, the page boy, the usher, the projectionist, and the orchestra leader. In this case, the heading of the advertisement begins with some statement like "Professor Bothevan says . . .," or "Washington Smith, the page boy, says . . .," or "Miss Mildred Merry, the cashier, says . . ."; then follows copy, calling attention to the reaction of the audience or the variety of types who bought tickets, or the interest of the photoplay, which was so intense that those who have projected many photoplays before felt a new thrill, etc.

Records.

Figures of record attendance at big city theatres where a special photoplay was road-showed can be used as a heading—for instance:

320,009 New Yorkers
211,213 Philadelphians
201,341 Bostonians
(Etc.)
Paid \$2,20 to see

• • • • • • • •

Miscellaneous.

Novelty advertisements are not limited to teasers, scatters and open letter endorsements, or quotation of comment. Headlines from the local newspaper referring to a news event that can be associated with the photoplay advertised can be used.

Cuts of locally well-known buildings, of local school and college seals, can also be used to win attention for the theatre advertisement.

Institutional Advertising.

Patronage, admittedly, does not depend exclusively upon the program. Evidently, of course, superior programs attract more patrons; but selling the institution is important. Consult Chapter IV. Every distinctive detail of location, service, admission price, equipment, etc., can be a factor in building theatre patronage. Call attention to such factors.

Your community may not know that your projection is ideal, while at competitor theatres there is distortion or other defects. Your community may not know that the air condition at your theatre is superior, that the organ is superior, that seating comforts are superior, that location makes the theatre easier to reach. You have paid for these and many other distinctive features; sell them.

Summer.

During the summer months especially, if you are appealing to neighboring communities from which your theatre can be reached by automobile, your layout might show the roads leading to your theatre. Your copy emphasizes the fact that a cool evening ride on good roads brings people to your cool, well-ventilated theatre, etc. A road map can be used as the background for this layout. However, it might be better to have a hand-drawn art layout in which your theatre front can be played up, and in which the proximity of the nearby communities can be indicated better than by using the road map.

Holidays.

Many holidays suggest a striking headline and copy in the spirit of the holiday; for instance, for Thanksgiving the program can be arranged like a dinner menu; for Independence Day the copy can emphasize the fact that real liberty depends upon certain entertainment, etc.; for Mother's Day the copy can suggest that family visits to the theatre keep the family together, and that there is no better time to start this worthwhile habit than on Mother's Day because a mother's joy is greatest when she sees the entire family together and happy as they are at the — Theatre. For Christmas Day a possible heading would be "The Christmas Gift of the --- Theatre to the People of Blanktown." Columbus Day suggests the headline: "435 Years Ago Columbus Discovered America. but here is another discovery . . ." The possibilities of this holiday timeliness in theatre advertising are evident. Timeliness is not limited to big holidays. Every outstanding local event offers the same possibilities. Concerning copy and illustrations for holidays consult Chapter XXIII and Chapter XXIX.

The News Reel.

There are very often instances when an event of exceptional interest is a unit in the news reel. In such cases the announcement of this event pictured on the screen will win more attention, and perhaps sell more tickets, than would the announcement of the other units of the program with the wornout words, "Also a News Reel."

Occasionally—very occasionally—the theatre advertisement can be set upside down, or the illustrations can be set right side up but the copy can be set upside down. When the title of the photoplay is appropriate, this is likely to be more effective. However, like any other novelty, too frequent a repetition of this is disastrous; generally this is a "just once."

When the regulations of the newspaper permit out-of-theordinary layout shapes and the title is suggested by the shape, your layout can be broken at the column lines. As illustrated in the appendix there also other novel layouts which can be made with standard printing materials and without artist and photo-engraving expense.

Conclusion.

The value of the novelty advertisement depends upon its occasional use. The familiar theatre directory or the display layout become so familiar, that they lose in attention value, and it is well to break the monotony with an occasional novelty advertisement. Novelty advertising, like other exceptional advertising, should be used when the program is exceptional. It is not good business to attract special attention to a program that is evidently inferior. It is novelty advertising that may attract the attention of those who are not regular theatre patrons, and their attention should be attracted at a time when the program is such that it may help to make them regular patrons by encouraging another visit to the theatre. A study of novelty advertising used for other products will suggest other ways in which the manager can occasionally escape from the routine use of some "typical theatre advertisement."

None of the novelty advertisements discussed here require a staff artist. Standard cuts supplied by producer-distributors, and the regular supply of newspaper materials—types, ornaments, rules, borders, and cuts from the newspaper morgue—will suffice. Of course, if there is a staff artist who is really capable, unique borders, novel backgrounds, checkerboard, bull's-eye, and jazz layouts, inlays, Benday effects and others are possible; but without the extra expense of staff artist, local photo-engraving and electrotyping and typography, novelty is possible, and effective.

CHAPTER XXVI

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

THE theatre uses so many mediums of advertising that the newspaper, like any other medium, cannot be considered an exclusive medium. It is supplemental, and that does not necessarily mean secondary in importance. Discussion concerning the relative value of newspaper advertising for motion picture theatres is a waste of time if the discussion is general.

It is a waste of time to state general principles concerning the percentage of advertising expenditure that should be allotted for newspaper advertising and the percentage that should be allotted to other mediums, and expect that this can be applied effectively everywhere.

Practically every theatre has a particular problem, and only in the light of real facts concerning that particular problem can any worth-while decision be made.

Newspaper advertising in general has certain features which should be considered. To-day about 2,000 daily newspapers are sold to over 36,000,000 people. In a year, approximately \$300,000,000 is paid to purchase copies of newspapers. Last year, approximately \$700,000,000 was spent for newspaper advertising, which is ten times the amount spent for billboards, and about five times the amount spent for magazine advertising.

Advantages.

The newspaper goes into the home. It generally has an interest for all members of the family. Because of reader habit it has a recognizable personality, so that its pages are approached with an intimacy and with a certain confidence. Because it reports daily events, the very tone of its pages carries a "Do it now" emphasis. It permits flexibility in the shape of advertising layouts. It permits the arrangement of copy so that emphasis can be given to details that have outstanding local importance. Because of composition, it permits quick change in layout. Because it carries local news, it makes

possible timely references in advertising to items on the news pages. Because circulation is relatively stable and not influenced by weather conditions, the calculation of the delivery of an advertising message is possible. Because of daily appearance, it permits of repetition advertising. The newspaper which carries an adequately and attractively arranged amusement page has a further advantage as far as theatre advertising is concerned. The proximity of a theatre advertisement to this theatre news is an advantage. Because the medium is elastic, space can be changed or can be used only when required.

As far as theatre advertising is concerned, the newspaper advertisement, like any other, has one function: to sell tickets. Even with institutional advertising, the exclusive purpose is sales—if not immediate, at least eventual.

Necessity.

It is evident that if theatre ticket sales could be made in just as great a number without the newspaper advertisement, the newspaper advertisement would not be necessary. It is evident that if other mediums of advertising at less expense could make as many sales, and make every sale that the newspaper could make, that the newspaper advertisement would not be necessary.

Here are peculiar situations: A certain theatre appeals to the mine workers of a community. The majority of these are foreigners. A throw-away in a foreign language, or a herald printed with a message in a foreign language, distributed to each of this theatre's possible prospects will evidently get results that would not be possible by using the local newspaper.

A theatre in a large city, the first-run house, the leading theatre in the city, catering to patrons over a large territory, has a different problem. Reference to the amusement page for information concerning this theatre's program is habitual all over the city. The newspaper, because of coverage, fair advertising rates, and because of the practice of competitive theatres, may be practically indispensable.

Here is another case. A neighborhood theatre in this same large city has its possible prospects within a limited territory.

Should it run display advertising in the metropolitan newspaper with a circulation of 300,000? If it does, the cost of this advertising will be determined by the circulation of the newspaper. In other words, the theatre pays for having its message carried to readers, the large majority of whom are in no sense prospective patrons for the theatre. There is also a neighborhood newspaper. It has a circulation that completely covers the territory from which the theatre draws patrons. Its advertising rate is determined by that circulation. Evidently, more space at cheaper rates would get more returns in proportion to the advertising expenditure, by using the neighborhood newspaper. However, if the metropolitan newspaper was responsible for the attendance of a certain number of readers at the particular theatre discussed, so that their attendance could be secured by no other advertising means, then the point to determine is whether the admission paid by these readers outbalances the additional expenditure necessary to reach them by the metropolitan newspaper.

Value.

There are two or more competitive newspapers in the same city, each reaching, to some extent, a large number of prospective patrons. What facts determine the relative value of the competitive newspapers? In considering these facts, realize that the conclusion does not mean exclusive use of one newspaper and the neglect of the others. The conclusion to be drawn by applying the considerations given is only one of the relative value of the newspaper as far as your theatre is concerned.

The showman possesses a certain sixth sense by which he "feels" the pull of a newspaper. He listens to local comment. To test returns on competitive newspapers he can use certain methods. For instance, in small type at the bottom of advertisements in competitive newspapers he can state that readers presenting the advertisement will be admitted at a reduced admission; or free admission can be offered to those who mark misspelled words in the theatre advertisement. Any such method gives only an approximation. Some readers will not take the trouble of searching for misspelled words. Some

readers will not even bother to report at the box office even if free or reduced admission is offered. However, if ten times as many returns came from one newspaper, and if an approximately identical difference in returns is found whenever a similar trial is made, there would be a basis of fact on which to make a decision.

The newspaper's main revenue comes from advertising. It sells white space as the dry-goods store sells yards of cloth or the grocery store sells pounds of sugar. The cost of this white space is based on circulation. Evidently, circulation is not a perfect or an accurate basis on which to determine cost of advertising for some products. Cost of white space should really be determined on results achievable. It is evident that the newspaper with quality circulation for a quality product would be worth more per inch than the newspaper without quality circulation, no matter what the actual figures of circulation might be. As far as the theatre is concerned, an important consideration is not the number of readers, but what people or what families read the newspaper. In what areas do these readers live? When is the newspaper read—in the morning or in the evening? Does the character of the newspaper, because of its general reliability and reputation, lend a confidence and reader interest to the advertisements it carries? A newspaper with a smaller circulation sometimes lends more confidence to its advertising pages because of reader loyalty or because of reader confidence in the reliability of a newspaper. Such a newspaper is accepted with a more friendly and more trusting attitude, and the advertisements profit accordingly.

As far as circulation is concerned, mere numbers are deceptive. Is the circulation based on the newspaper's sheer value as a newspaper or has it been artificially stimulated by premiums, clubbing offers, contests, etc., which make that circulation only temporary?

What is the physical appearance both of the news columns and the advertising columns of a newspaper? Does it carry feature and special articles regularly? What is the attitude of national advertisers and local advertisers concerning the effectiveness of a particular newspaper?

What is the editorial policy of the newspaper concerning censorship, detrimental legislation? What co-operation does the newspaper offer? Is its attitude towards motion-picture entertainment indifferent? Will it consider with fair, business-like attitude co-operative advertising activities?

Does it carry an attractively prepared theatre page? Not only because it is a service to readers, such as an adequate sporting page, or an adequate woman's page, or an adequate market page, but because it is indicative of appreciation of the place that entertainment holds in the life of the community. Is efficient service given in the composing room? Is no discrimination shown against advertising so that page location is given as fairly to the regular theatre advertiser as to any other regular advertiser using the same space? Is theatre advertising deliberately and regularly placed where it will be smothered by bold display of other advertising, or is it given fair treatment as regards surrounding material?

Attention should be given to the street sales of different editions, home deliveries, when different editions reach the home, the circulation of different editions in different districts, the percentage of circulation that goes to suburban readers, etc.

Readers.

As far as theatre advertising is concerned, two things should be considered: Some readers as regular patrons seek out the advertisement deliberately to get information. Other readers—many of them not even occasional patrons—are turning the pages of a newspaper without any thought of theatre attendance. As far as they are concerned, the theatre advertisement has a value only when it will win their attention, as they hurry by, and then so convince that attendance will follow. These are the really profitable readers; you might not get these by other methods.

In general, it is true that newspaper advertising supplements the advertising of theatre screen, billboards, lobby and marquee display, window displays, and other activities. It does not inaugurate an advertising campaign. It is generally the closing, reminding, clinching shot.

For some programs, billboards and outdoor advertising activities are generally more effective. This does not mean, of course, that the newspaper that gets results will carry no advertisement. On the other hand, certain programs, because of the nature of their appeal, are better advertised with emphasis on newspaper advertising. This does not mean, of course, that other mediums will be neglected.

Space.

The amount of space used depends upon both the considerations outlined above, and also the importance of the newspaper as an advertising medium for your particular theatre, at this particular time, with a program of this particular appeal, upon the coverage of the newspaper in its relation to the territory where your prospects reside, and, lastly, upon competitor practices.

Results are not in direct proportion to the amount of space used. Increased space beyond a certain point may not bring a return to justify the expenditure. It is inaccurate to reason that, if you can attract 200 patrons with 10 inches, you can attract 400 with 20 inches. As far as increase in space is concerned, if you regularly use a set amount of space for every program, no particular program stands out as more important as far as space used is concerned. On the other hand, if you use a certain space regularly, but use a much smaller space for a particular program, this implies that it is not important. Certain productions do justify more space than is regularly used. As far as attention value is concerned, it is generally admitted that it increases in direct ratio to increase in space used—up to quarter page; after that the increase in attention is not in direct ratio to increase in space used.

Economies.

An economy that can be practiced for theatres which do not operate on Sundays is the following: If the Sunday newspapers carry display advertisements of the program of the following week, it does not seem necessary to advertise again in the Monday morning newspapers. In fact, in some cases further display advertising in the Monday evening newspapers

means an expense which does not bring justifying results. The Sunday display advertising, if it was effective, did what need not be done again by the Monday morning or perhaps even the Monday evening newspapers.

Rates.

Newspaper advertising space is sold either by the agate line or by the column inch. The extremes are from a fraction of one cent per line to \$1.50 per line. The rate is generally determined by circulation. However, no standard rate per thousand circulation has been adopted for general use. The main reason is because the value of the newspaper does not depend exclusively upon circulation.

The rate per line per column inch is higher for what is called "preferred position"—for instance, assurance of position next to pure reading matter, or top of column, or on a news page, or on a particular page, etc.

Generally, a reduced rate is given to regular advertisers who use large spaces, such as department stores, and in some cases this rate automatically adjusts itself according to changes in circulation.

Amusement Rates.

The same advertising rate, per line or column, as far as space is concerned, is usually charged to all regular advertisers—except the theatre. Is this because the theatre is not a regular advertiser? No! Is this because theatre layout requires some special treatment and some special care? No! Is this because theatre advertising sells a product which is of so low a grade that it should not appear side by side with patent medicine advertising, sex novel advertising, sensational promotion advertising, night club advertising, or questionable roadhouse advertising? No!

The so-called amusement rate is generally higher than the run-of-paper rate; in some cases it is 280 per cent higher; in many cases it is double the general display rate. There are newspapers in which the amusement rate is no different from the run-of-paper rate. More and more newspapers are adopting this policy.

The day will come when practically everywhere the amusement rate and the run-of-paper rate will be the same. The editor of one of the leading newspaper trade weeklies in a series of convincing editorials picked out real facts, speaking from the viewpoint of the newspaper's interests, and emphasizing the fact that the motion-picture industry is one of the ranking industries of the country, went on record that motion-picture advertising is entitled to run-of-paper rate.

Arguments.

In many cases an amusement rate no higher than run-ofpaper rate will be allowed when the local theatre advertiser can present convincing arguments in the language of the newspaper representatives. If newspaper advertising were absolutely indispensable, so that the theatre would close its doors if newspapers did not carry the theatre advertisement. this might not be a case where arguments would avail. But the theatre uses more mediums of advertising than any other retailer. It is to the advantage of the newspaper to offer a rate which will be equitable, so that the newspaper will become a more important part in the theatre's advertising campaigns. To penalize the theatre with an exorbitant rate will mean that the full selling value that the newspaper has will never be appreciated, because sufficient space will not be used to give it a fair trial. Consequently, any discussion of rates is to the advantage of the newspaper as well as to the theatre.

How did it ever happen that exorbitant rates were charged for amusement advertising?

Tradition.

The answer takes us back to the distant days when the theatre locally owned was rented by touring companies. The house management took a flat rental and the touring manager took the risks. He was an outsider. He was seldom in a town for longer than one week. What the local newspaper asked of this outsider did not interest the local management. Exorbitant rates took no money out of his pocket—in fact, he might have been a part owner of the newspaper.

Because only small newspaper space was then purchased, any dispute about the rate was not worth-while. Besides, the theatre was the only advertiser then asking for so-called "news stories." If these news stories were carried by the newspaper, it was even harder to object against the increased rate because the increase was supposed to cover additional press work.

In those days there was no radio and no automobile. There were no paid press agents seeking free publicity for hotels, department stores, railroads, lumber, cement, steamship lines, fire and life insurance, real estate, etc.

The theatre, through its traveling road-show advertiser, was the only institution regularly asking editorial favors. It could not very well object to double rates in return for a few columns of free editorial mention, even though it could be argued that the subject matter of these columns was live news and an instance of newspaper reader service. It was not worth objecting to, because the traveling manager was there to-day and gone to-morrow.

To-day.

To-day things are different. Instead of one-half inch, single-column advertisements, the motion picture theatres not only purchase large daily space, but their practice has carried the legitimate theatres into using larger space than they were accustomed to use. The motion picture theatre, however, is penalized by tradition.

It is argued that the exorbitant rate is justified by so-called "amusement news" carried on other pages of the newspaper. This news is either a reader service or it is not. If it is a reader service it should be supplied by the newspaper as any other news is supplied. If it is not a reader service, then the newspaper which agrees to print as news, material what is not news and which takes in return for this deception the dollars of some advertiser, does not observe the traditionally estimable ethics of journalism.

No reputable editor would admit that he was filling his columns with material under the guise of news which was really paid-for advertising, any more than he would admit that his editorial policy had been guided by bonuses paid to shape his opinion.

Interesting news concerning entertainment is placed on the newspaper page because it is interesting. It should be placed there by the progressive newspaper interested in reader service whether amusement advertising was carried or not. If this is not the case, then editorial standards are not actually what they are set down to be in the inspiring pronouncements of newspaper ethics.

Any theatre manager who arranges with a newspaper so that "for each two lines of paid-for space one free line of entertainment news will be run" is entering into a contract which is not fair to the people of any community. News is accepted or not according to one criterion: reader service. Advertising is accepted or not by the criterion: so much per inch or column line. There is no confusion between the two.

Other Advertisers.

Strange to say, other advertisers who are given run-ofpaper rate receive columns of "news stories," and no suggestion is made that they should pay more for their advertising space because of this news copy; in fact, some businesses take no advertising in the newspaper, and yet the newspaper gives columns and columns of news story that will further the welfare of that particular business. Look at the sporting pages of the daily papers. Take a one-yard measure and figure out the column space given to the local college athletic contest, for which, incidentally, admission price is charged. Consider professional baseball. The newspapers at their own expense will send a local correspondent with the team to wire in stories of spring training activities or out-of-town contests. In return they usually get no advertising. Sometimes they get one-half inch of advertising. Sometimes the editors and compositors find it hard to get by the turnstiles, because season passes are distributed none too liberally.

Consider the radio sections which even the metropolitan newspapers issue. The expense of these sections and all the space used does not require that the radio manufacturers pay any exorbitant advertising rate. Consider the automobile sections of the newspaper. Consider the real estate sections. Consider the book magazine section, and also the book reviews, which incidentally carry publisher's name and cost per volume just as the paid-for theatre advertisement carries theatre name and admission price.

Why space for real estate, radio, automobiles, fashions, athletic contests, sport news? There is only one answer: Reader interest in these activities justifies the space. The space used is not justly determined by advertising revenue.

Interest.

Motion pictures are of more widespread interest. Women readers are not interested in the sporting pages. Men readers are not interested in the fashion page. The real estate sections interest relatively few. The automobile section interests relatively few. Judging by the number of radio sections left unopened on the newsstand there must be quite a few newspaper readers not interested in this reader service. A larger percentage of readers are interested in motion-picture news than are interested in the above-mentioned "news."

Women Readers.

The strongest argument any newspaper can offer an advertiser is woman reader interest. Yet we know that women are in the majority of motion-picture audiences. If entertaining and interesting motion-picture stories are carried by a newspaper, this makes that newspaper of greater interest to women readers, and consequently the newspaper has a stronger argument with which to approach national advertisers. If the fan magazines are securing much national advertising which never goes into the newspapers, it may be because the advertisers feel that these products advertised in the fan magazines will get more sales. Yet the very same products could be advertised in the newspaper, on an attractive amusement page, which can carry the very same material that is carried by the fan magazines. This material is available. If the newspaper uses it, it is to the newspaper's advantage.

As a regular advertiser the local theatre manager has a strong case. He has convincing arguments to use. He should not be expected to pay exorbitant amusement rates. In cases where rival newspapers are in severe competition, the theatre's advertising in one newspaper which gives fair treatment in the matter of rates might bring more light to the subject, if the arguments suggested here fall on deaf ears. But, generally, when the old retort of "It is tradition" is used by the newspaper executive, this is discarded and a fair, businesslike solution is effected if convincing arguments are used by the local theatre advertiser.

Relations with the Newspaper.

Regardless of how very popular and very powerful a theatre manager may be in his community, he can never afford to encourage anything but the most friendly relations with local newspaper men. The sympathy and understanding of newspaper men are a powerful asset. This does not mean that rates and space will be determined on any other than a strictly business basis; but in friendly relationship there is a mutual advantage to both the newspaper and the theatre.

The more members of the newspaper staffs who are interested in the theatre and actually friendly with the manager, and anxious to co-operate, the better.

This involves the personal equation, and is not something that can be regulated by fixed principles. No suggestion can be given for the proper handling of newspaper men, except insistence upon tact, common sense, and an understanding of the problems of the newspaper. Cultivate the friendship of every member of the staff. This is a matter of studying the men. The judicious use of theatre passes is helpful; but never think that newspaper men can be "bought" with passes. The pass for them is an indication of good-will and not a payment for business service. Space is the only thing that newspapers have to sell. You have no more reason to expect that space can be bought with passes, than you have for expecting that the theatre rent can be paid with passes. Without cordial relations, good fellowship, understanding, and decent treatment the theatre pass is practically worthless.

Do everything that you can to make newspaper men realize that you are ready to co-operate; for instance, if you

learn of a piece of news that would make good copy, let the newspaper know about it, whether it is theatre news or not. and you thus show your interest in the newspaper's welfare. You might witness an accident that the newspaper would be glad to know about. You might know in advance of the visit of some well-known personage to your community. You might know of some important move in the industry that would be of particular interest to local readers. You, as well as any other citizen of the community, might notice business details which have a bearing on the welfare of the newspaper—for instance, certain newsstands might be covering up particular newspapers; certain newsboys might be overcharging or otherwise discriminating against a particular newspaper; certain unfair comment regarding the editorial policy of a newspaper might be in circulation. You bring these facts to the attention of the newspaper, as an evidence of your interest in its welfare and not with any selfish motive.

All this makes it evident that besides the strictly business relationship with the newspaper, besides the co-operative advertising activities with mutual advantages, there are instances where friendly relationship can be developed, where you can go out of your way, as any other fair-minded citizen would, to help the newspaper.

Fairness.

Never try to "put anything over" on the reporters. If you are trying a novel exploitation stunt, do not deceive the newspaper. Never lie to the reporters; you may deceive them once, and be successful in securing a so-called "publicity story," but your chances for a repetition of deception are negligible.

The motion-picture industry is still suffering from the "publicity stunts" and "scare-line ballyhoo" of hoax-makers. The stunt which endangers human life, the fake which ties-up traffic, the false alarm to bring the engines near the theatre where a fire photoplay is showing, with the evident danger to the pedestrians and with the risk of possible accidents, at the expense of taxpayers' money—may look clever; it may even be responsible for a story in the newspapers. The fake drowning in the park lake, the fake murder which keeps police and detectives

up all night hunting for clues and keeps reporters busy, the false story of a jewel robbery—these are a few of the luscious but sour activities which have been misappropriately called "clever publicity." These were inherited from the days when the advance circus man came to town, and faked and fooled and hoaxed as many as he could because he knew he would be gone when the truth came out. The theatre is now a permanent institution, often set solidly in granite and steel, representing an investment of over a million dollars, an institution which is to last in a community as long as the college, the court house, the newspaper building, the department store, the library. If the motion-picture theatre were a tent show, that would pass on at the end of the week; if it were a fly-by-night carnival, then hoax publicity might have some justification. As it is, such tactics are detrimental.

The motion-picture "hoax publicity man" is a detriment to the locality, rather than an asset. When he comes into a community to "help" the local manager, the "help" usually consists in collecting tear sheets from the newspaper to be freighted to the home office as "eye wash" for the executive who signs his three-figure salary check. The more he hoaxes, and the more he fakes, the harder it will be for the local manager to straighten out the damage after he has gone.

Hoax publicity is splendid exploitation—for the hoax publicity expert. It is bad for the industry.

The real showman does not fool the newspaper men. He gets no young reporter into trouble with fakes and falsehood. He knows newspaper men. He knows that a newspaper, like any other institution, cannot fool its customers. He knows the newspaper man is not "a sucker." He knows that the newspaper man will believe what seems to be the truth, until he has found that the teller uses language for something else than it was intended.

Ethics.

The ethics of the newspaper business is no different from the ethics of the theatre business or the ethics of any business. The hoax publicity expert usually justifies his activity with some such statement as: "Showmen are born and not made," giving the implication that the fake activities which have so long cast a shadow on the name "showman," as far as newspaper men are concerned, are justified by some God-given right. One can be a showman and at the same time carry on fair, truthful, friendly relationship with newspaper men. Therefore, never wreck this helpful friendship by deception.

Advice.

Relationship with newspaper men should include the compositor. When he takes a personal interest in the layout of the theatre advertisement, he will not only make helpful suggestions, but be on the lookout to catch mistakes which the theatre manager might have overlooked. Experienced old-time compositors know more about newspaper layouts than the average theatre advertiser. Naturally they resent the "knowit-all" attitude of the theatre advertiser who walks into the composing room-and he is usually ignorant of mechanical limitations of newspaper production—and talks to them as if they were novices. Even in the smaller cities, where compositors are not so expert and competent, better results are secured by tactful suggestion, than by brow-beating command. Improvements in theatre advertising often depend on a compositor's interest and his willingness to do a little more than he actually must do because the theatre advertiser treats him as any man should be treated.

When friendship is established with local newspaper men, many an effective advertising activity will be suggested. Therefore, let them know of your coming attractions. Ask them frankly what suggestions they have. They are in close touch with public opinion and know what angles of certain productions can be advertised to best advantage. If they make a suggestion, accept it tactfully, and do not wave it away with a haughty gesture and condescending smile which say, "Showmen are born and not made, only the showman understands the public."

Conclusion.

Relations with a newspaper are first as regards the matter of rates, on a strictly business basis. In matters of co-

operative advertising there is a mutual advantage for the newspaper and for the theatre. Then, there is what might be called the personal relationship, and this is effective when by tactful, common-sense handling of men you develop their interest in your welfare, and do your best to further their welfare.

CHAPTER XXVII

NEWSPAPER CO-OPERATIVE ADVERTISING

THE newspaper, co-operating with the motion-picture theatre, can carry out many advertising activities which have a distinct advantage both to the newspaper and to the theatre.

It is not good business to request exceptional co-operation from the newspaper for activities which will increase receipts at the theatre, with the argument that because the theatre is a regular advertiser it is entitled to this exceptional co-operation. It is not the advertising space regularly purchased by the theatre which justifies the newspaper's participation in the co-operative campaigns discussed here. It is inadvisable to request co-operative advertising for such a reason. The only fair argument to urge is the advantage which will accrue to the newspaper from such activity.

Reader Interest.

Executives at the newspaper office are primarily interested in reader interest for their pages. Increase in circulation is their objective. Therefore, the plans which the theatre manager suggests should be those that will win reader interest and thus promote circulation of the newspaper. Articles, essays, novel features, and contests have an influence in building newspaper circulation that is comparable to the influence of the news service and the editorial policy. This is evident from the number of contests regularly conducted by the average newspaper. There are popularity contests, dress-designing contests, crossword-puzzle contests, essay contests, cartoon and drawing contests, and others too numerous to mention, which are conducted by the newspapers themselves to promote circulation.

Newspapers are in strong competition to secure contest ideas which will be novel. They welcome ideas for contests that will be popular locally.

Your Opportunity.

This request for contests gives the theatre an opportunity which does not exist for other local institutions. The general interest in photoplays, the glamorous appeal of contests based on current productions, and the fact that there is universal appeal in these contests are all recognized by newspaper executives. Illustrated material in the form of line and half-tone cuts is available to make such contests even more interesting, and to save the expense of newspaper art-work. Moreover, the problem of prizes for contests, which is always a difficult one, is solved in the case of co-operative contests executed by the newspaper in conjunction with the theatre, by offering theatre passes as rewards. The theatre pass, for some reason or other, always has a value as a prize far beyond the actual admission price.

Advantage.

In presenting theatre plans for co-operative activities to the local newspapers, the point to be stressed by the theatre manager is the reader-interest and circulation-building influence of the plan. Mention should be made of the other advertising activities of the theatre in connection with the particular photoplay discussed, to establish the fact that because of amusement-page advertising, lobby display, screen and program announcements, billboard and window display advertising, widespread local interest will be developed. Newspaper executives will be anxious to tie-in with something that will be of such widespread interest, because of the theatre's other advertising activity.

Some ideas which can be used by the newspaper in conjunction with the theatre are:

1. Classified Ads.

The theatre passes can be offered to those readers who find their names or their telephone numbers on the classified ad page. This induces more readers to examine that page and thus it is more valuable to advertisers. The advantage of this for the theatre is that the newspaper in announcing these passes

will run a box on the first page mentioning the production, theatre and play date for which the passes are offered. This idea is best used when the name of the production is appropriate, such as "Classified" or "Wanted—A Wife." An essay contest can be conducted on "What is the most interesting Classified Ad on the Page?" with passes for the five best letters. It also can be used every day.

2. Diary.

The newspaper can carry a series of "Chapters" on the classified ad page. Each chapter can carry a little story dealing with the experiences of a young girl in the city and how she overcame difficulties by the use of the classified ads. Readers contribute the "chapters." For the best chapter submitted each day, the theatre offers a pass. The advantage to the newspaper is the increased interest in the classified ad page. The advantage to the theatre is that a box is run on the front page announcing the theatre, production, and play-date for which the pass is offered.

3. Essay Contest.

The newspaper can conduct a contest with prize passes for the best answer in 500 words to some question based upon the production showing at the theatre. For instance, for the production, "Happy Hours," the question reads, "What brings the most pleasure to a happy hour?" For the production, "The Gentleman," the question should be worded, "What are the ten qualities that make a gentleman?" For the production, "The Flapper," the question reads, "How does the modern flapper differ from the old-time girl?" The advantage to the newspaper is that these essays on a timely subject create reader interest. The advantage to the theatre is that free announcements are carried by the newspaper listing the theatre, attraction and play-date. Moreover, word-of-mouth comment is stimulated concerning the program.

4. Personal Experience Contest.

This is similar to the essay contests except that the reader is supposed to contribute material based on personal expe-

riences. For instance, with the title, "The Crowded Hour," the newspaper offers prizes for the best 300-word letter telling about the hour of the reader's life that was most eventful. With the title, "The Great Adventure," letters giving an account of a personal adventure are contributed. Again the advantage to the newspaper is increased reader interest. The advantage to the theatre is that the newspaper in announcing the contest tells about the production upon whose title the letter-writing contest is based.

5. Dress-Designing Contest.

In advance of the play date, the newspaper, on the woman's page, can run a blank figure of a woman with the announcement that for the best design sketched over this figure, the newspaper will give an order on a local ladies' furnishing shop for a dress to be selected by the winner. Of course, this contest is selected for a fashion picture in which new fashions are displayed, and the newspaper in its announcement describes some of the fashions that will be worn in the production. The co-operation of a local ladies' furnishing shop is secured because of the publicity it is given in The advantage to the newspaper is evithe newspaper. dent. Because this contest runs about two weeks, the theatre is assured of repeated reminders of the coming attraction. Attention is focused on one of the high-lights of the production.

6. Cartoon Films.

If a local newspaper is using a cartoon service that you are using on your program, the theatre program can announce the fact, and in return for this the newspaper will carry announcements of the cartoon film at the theatre. An amateur cartoon-drawing contest can be arranged by the theatre and the newspaper.

7. School Contests.

Readers are interested in seeing what local boys and girls can do. Consequently, contests limited to students attract special interest. When the production has a patriotic appeal,

the essay contest can be conducted by the newspaper with theatre passes for prizes. The advantage to the theatre is that free announcements are carried by the newspaper.

8. Automobile Contest.

To attract interest to the automobile page, the news-paper announces prizes to those names of car owners or owners of license numbers that appear on the automobile page. These should be the numbers of careful drivers at certain corners as noted by the police or your own observer. The advantage to the theatre is that free announcements are carried concerning the theatre, production and playdate. An automobile photoplay is most appropriate for this.

9. Safe-Driving Contest.

The newspaper starts a campaign for safe-driving in the city. It announces theatre passes for those whose car numbers are reported by traffic policemen each day for the most careful driving. The advantage to the theatre is the free announcements concerning the theatre, production and play-date for which the passes are offered.

10. Juvenile Contests.

Juvenile clubs are featured in the Sunday editions of many newspapers. Contests are conducted in this section with theatre passes for prizes. In return, the newspaper carries announcements concerning the theatre, production and play-date. If possible, programs of children's matinees should be the basis of contests in the "Juvenile Section."

11. Lucky Photograph Contest.

The newspaper takes group pictures of students of the different schools—and in each issue runs a picture with a ring around one of the children photographed. This child, upon proper identification, receives a theatre pass. Or, do not limit the contest to children—take photos through certain store windows or have a photographer at a certain corner during lunch hour.

12. Puzzle Contests.

The prizes for puzzle contests which are conducted so regularly by newspapers can occasionally be theatre passes. This is especially effective when the title of the production is appropriate. The advantage to the theatre is the free announcements carried concerning the theatre, production and play-date.

13. Identification Contest.

The masked picture of a star or a star photo which has been cut in pieces which must be properly assembled for identification is run by the newspaper with theatre prizes for proper identification.

14. Symposiums.

This is a familiar newspaper device for getting the names of important local leaders into the newspaper. The symposium is a collection of short comment pro or con on some live problem, such as prohibition, the League of Nations, local ordinances, the flapper problem, etc. The theatre suggests for the symposium a problem which is the theme of a coming attraction. The newspaper announces the coming attraction and its problem, and invites leaders to express opinions pro and con. For instance, with such a title as "Why Girls Leave Home," the newspaper collects a series of comments from prominent people and runs these during the advance campaign for the production. Contributions are solicited with articles explaining the problem of the photoplay. The advantage to the theatre is the discussion stimulated concerning the production, and also the free announcements carried by the newspaper. Another application of the same idea is to open the symposium to the public and invite letters, personal reminiscences and comments. It is well to have a few sample contributions prepared in advance to show the general style expected for the symposium.

15. Title Contests.

The newspaper offers cash prizes or theatre passes donated by the theatre for the best title submitted by a reader to identify a particular star. It is particularly advantageous for the theatre when it is about to play some newly-established star. To help the reader the newspaper announces that other stars have titles which identify them. For instance, Mary Pickford's identifying title might be "America's Sweetheart"; Gloria Swanson's, "Glorious Gloria"; Raymond Griffith's, "The funny fellow with the silk hat"; Charlie Chaplin's, "The man with the funny feet," etc. The contest is conducted for two weeks in advance of the play-date of the photoplay in which the star appears. In announcing the contest the newspaper carries a photograph of the star with an account of her work in the production which will be shown at the theatre.

16. Booster Motto Contest.

This contest is based on civic pride. The newspaper announces prizes in the form of passes to those who send the most striking Booster Motto or slogan concerning the local community. The Booster Motto is phrased such as: "The city of has a greater population per acre than any other city of the state." "The city of has miles of paved streets." "The city of has a lower unemployment record than" These Booster Mottoes are based on statistics of commercial, industrial, educational, recreational and transportation advantages of the community. The advantage to the newspaper is that the contest develops appreciation of the newspaper's interest in the welfare of the community. The advantage to the theatre is that in every announcement of the contest, mention is made of the theatre, production and play-date for which the passes are offered.

The winning Booster Motto might even be shown on the screen of the co-operating theatre. Material to assist contestants is available at the local Chamber of Commerce. To stimulate interest in the schools during this contest, material supplied by the Chamber of Commerce can be displayed on the bulletin board of the schools along with posters supplied by the theatre. To add impressiveness to the contest, letters of endorsement can be published from the Mayor, the President of the Chamber of Commerce and other civic leaders. If the contest starts at the time when the theatre is playing a

photoplay with a theme based on home-town pride, the newspaper announcements can bring out this fact, and thus create more interest in that particular production. One of the outstanding features of the contest is that it lasts over a period of time so that the theatre is given almost uninterrupted mention in the newspaper. The theatre also benefits by the goodwill developed from the realization that it is interested in the community's welfare. The winning Booster Mottos can be shown regularly in the theatre lobby and printed in the theatre program.

17. Drawing.

The newspaper carries a series of numbers over dots with instructions that the reader draw lines from dot to dot, following the order of the numbers. These lines form the head of a well-known star. Prizes are offered for the neatest drawings with the best 300-word letter telling the characteristic qualities of that particular star's screen work.

18. Toast-Writing Contests.

The newspaper carries a few sample rhymed toasts to a star, and then gives the initial line of a toast which is to be completed by the reader. Prizes are awarded for the most original and appropriate toasts submitted by readers. The advantage to the theatre is the free announcements given the theatre, production and play-date. The advantage to the newspaper is the interest developed by such a contest.

19. Jingle-Rhyming Contest.

The jingle is like a limerick with a missing line that is to rhyme with the title of the production. The prize is offered in this contest for the most original and appropriate line to complete the jingle. The advantage to the theatre, plus the announcements of the theatre, production and play-date is the fact that contestants are forced to repeat the title of the coming attraction in composing jingles.

20. Letters or Essay Contests Limited to Groups.

The problem of the photoplay or some situation in it can be used as the subject of an essay or letter contest which is limited to a certain group. Contributors can be limited to flappers or to bachelors or to mothers or to fathers or to old maids, etc. The group selected for a particular contest will depend on the particular photoplay problem to be discussed.

21. Historical Contest.

For the photoplay based on certain periods in the history of America, an essay or letter contest can be based on reminiscences of the period, or based on details of local history that have a bearing on those shown in the production.

22. Motion Picture Review Contest.

The newspaper offers prizes for the best motion picture review of the photoplay showing at the co-operating theatre. The disadvantage of this is that the reviews are not published until after play-date and attendance is not developed by the published reviews. However, there is the advantage of increasing attendance because of the desire of the readers to see the photoplay and enter the contest. Reviews published on the amusement page bring a new interest to this page.

23. Coloring Contest.

Productions with color photography suggest a contest in which newspaper readers use crayons or paints to color a black-and-white line cut of a scene from the production. The prize is determined by the most artistic and most appropriate coloring given to the black-and-white background. The advantage to the theatre is that attention is centered on the color photography of the production, which is one of its outstanding features.

24. Classified Ads.

Insert among the classified ads the offer of a reward for the return of a key that has been lost. This is most suitable for a production with the word "key" in the title. Scatter keys around the city, each carrying a different number, and have a reward for the key of a particular number or have a pass given for each authentic key turned in.

25. Popularity Contest.

Contests to determine the most popular debutante, the most popular school boy or school girl, the most popular policeman or fireman, and the most popular teacher, are conducted by newspapers with voting coupons published in daily editions. If each contest can be arranged so it has some bearing on a photoplay, the theatre is assured of extensive publicity, and its co-operation can be in the form of theatre passes for prizes and in screen and program announcements of the contest.

The theatre can donate a cup for the citizen who during the year does the most for the civic welfare of the community. The winner could be decided by the vote of a committee selected by the newspaper or by voting coupons published in the newspaper. A cup could also be offered for the most valuable player on a local school team or a local professional team. The publicity which would come to the theatre from such contests would be worth far more than the cost of the cup donated by the theatre.

26. Newsboy Showings.

Newsboys of a local paper are given a special showing of a suitable production in return for special stories carried concerning the theatre, production, and play-date. This is more effective if the newspaper is running the serial of the photoplay story.

27. Special Showings to Institutions.

Orphans and inmates of public institutions are guests at the theatre for a special showing of a suitable production. The newspaper carries special announcements in return for the privilege of stating that the special showing is given under the auspices of the newspaper.

28. Crossword Puzzles.

The puzzle and the solution are based upon a current photoplay using the title, cast's names, etc. Prizes can be theatre passes. The newspaper carries clues for the crossword puzzle in the form of articles concerning the photoplay.

29. Moviegram.

This is a title given to a story outline or a letter outline which combines the names of a group of photoplay titles to make a running story. This can be used during Greater Movie Season when titles of productions during the coming season are the basis of the moviegram. It can also be used in daily change theatres when the moviegram is based on the titles of productions being shown at the theatre during the month. The advantage to the theatre in having titles of photoplays published in newspapers is evident. The advantage to the newspaper is reader interest in such a contest. The following excerpt illustrates the general form of a moviegram:

Captain Sazarac had Fine Manners but was The Ace of Cads. His motto was Love 'Em and Leave 'Em. The College Flirt told him to Get Off the Earth, and Nell Gwyn, The Gallant Lady, said of his line, "It's All Blarney." He certainly liked Variety, but finally did The Wedding March with Aloma of the South Seas, went to New York, bringing his valet, Kid Boots, and became known as The Show Off around the Hotel Imperial. When this was Padlocked he yearned for the Hazards of the Jungle, so they left the Metropolis on the liner Old Ironsides, but soon found Love's Greatest Mistake was to become The Married Man without cash. Result-Stranded in Paris, where he became the Head Waiter in a cabaret called Mantrap, featuring "The Greatest Show on Earth." Here Aloma appeared as The Lady of the Harem and succeeded in Fascinating Youth, also proving it untrue that Gentlemen Prefer Blondes. One day, Beau Geste, A Man of River, came in with a bunch of The Rough Riders, etc., etc.

30. Millinery Drawing.

A line cut of a popular star head is first carried in the newspaper with the announcement that a prize will be offered to the one who draws in the most attractive hat which is in the fashion of those worn by the star in the photoplay. A local millinery shop will tie-in with the contest, and perhaps the prize awarded can be a selection of one of the shop's hats.

31. Wise-crack Contest.

These are now so generally common that the nature of the contest is understood. As far as the theatre is concerned, it can offer passes as prizes for a contest in which the title of a picture is mentioned.

32. Pronunciation Contest.

When the photoplay title is one that generally is not easily pronounced, or when the name of one of the cast is not easily pronounced, the familiar pronunciation contest conducted by newspapers can be used with prizes offered for the correct pronunciation, accompanied by a two-hundred-word story on what characterizes the particular star, or what is the particular appeal of the photoplay in question.

33. Lingo Contest.

With Western photoplays, carnival photoplays, and stage photoplays the lingo contest is conducted by publishing a list of words and offering prizes for the correct meaning of each word given. Along with this contest the newspaper will carry stories developing interest in the photoplay on which the contest is based. For the Western photoplay, words like "Broncho," "Pinto," "Round-up," "Tenderfoot," etc., will occur; for the carnival photoplay words like "Grift," "Spieler," "Hey Rube," "Keister," "Racket," etc.; for the stage photo-play, "Drop," "Fly," "Back-Stage," "Up-stage," "Gag," etc.

34. Star Contest.

To develop exceptional interest in a particular star, a contest can be arranged with prizes for a five-hundred-word story concerning the part in which the star has played most effectively. This will make it possible to carry summaries of parts played by the star in former productions. Evidently, illustrations of former characterizations played by the star can be used.

35. Title Contest.

When a photoplay title carries four words or more, a contest can be arranged with prizes awarded to those who

can show why one word in the title rather than another should be emphasized. For instance, with the title, "So This Is Paris," should the emphasis be placed

"SO this is Paris."
"So THIS is Paris."
"So this IS Paris."
"So this is PARIS."

With the title, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," should emphasis be given the word "Gentlemen," or the word "Prefer," or the word "Blondes." Evidently, contests like this require careful study of the photoplay involved, and usually require theatre attendance.

36. Serials.

Serials for continuous syndication in newspapers are prepared for some feature photoplays. This service often carries mats of illustrations for newspaper reproduction. When a local newspaper is carrying the units of a serialization, the opportunities for the local theatres which have booked the photoplay are countless. Evidently, the newspaper will welcome the theatre's attempts to call attention of its patrons to the serial in the newspaper. Theatre programs, the screen, etc., can carry appropriate announcements. Even lobby panels can be used for tear sheets from the local newspaper. In return, the newspaper will run contests of many kinds, and perhaps include in its announcements the notice that the photoplay of the serial will be shown at your theatre. Newspaper delivery wagons may also carry your play-date and theatre name. The serialization is prepared by the producer-distributor to help the exhibitor. It only remains for the exhibitor to accept the proffered assistance.

Merchant Co-operative Advertising Page.

The newspaper is interested in plans to increase advertising revenue. The merchant co-operative advertising page, because it brings advertising revenue which otherwise would not come to the newspaper, is favored. It can be arranged by the theatre manager. An entire page is set aside at the full-page advertising rate. This page is divided into sections, and local mer-

chants pay the advertising rate for the amount of space they take on the page. The page is usually so arranged that the cross page streamer across the top is reserved for the theatre announcement, and beneath this in the center of the page is the space for the theatre ad with theatre cut and production cut. The full-page advertising cost is so pro-rated that the cooperating merchants meet the entire expense of the page, while the space given to the theatre involves no cost to the theatre, because it is understood that the manager's activity in soliciting the merchants and preparing the layout for the page justifies that amount of free space.

Advantages.

Merchants generally are favorably disposed toward cooperative pages. They want display advertising, but individually cannot meet the expense of a display ad large enough to get attention. They realize that their advertisement on a striking full page that ties-in with the glamorous appeal of a coming photoplay will win attention which the same size advertisement appearing alone on a regular advertising page would not attract.

Layout.

Before the theatre manager, who can be accompanied if necessary by the advertising solicitor of the newspaper, interviews merchants, it is well that he prepare a dummy with spaces marked according to the size and number of ads that will be required. It is not well to have merchants select preferred positions, because this makes it harder to sell the less favored positions to other merchants. In selecting the material which is to go in each merchant's space, extra heavy type or any cut which would throw the page out of balance and give undue emphasis to an individual advertisement should be discouraged. The manager in many cases can help the merchant select the copy and help arrange the layout of the advertisement, because the effectiveness of the page depends upon unity. Each advertisement should carry some detail that ties-in with the general story of the page. The co-operative page is most effective when there is some connection between the products or the policy of the advertising merchants, and the particular photoplay which the theatre advertises. It depends upon the ingenuity of the manager to devise some connection, and the following are examples of what has been done:

- 1. For the photoplay, "The Unbroken Chain," the page was limited to advertisements of the chain stores in the community.
- 2. For the photoplay, "Fair Dealing," each merchant emphasized the fair dealing given by his store.
- 3. For "The Ten Commandments," each merchant represented on the page set down in his advertisement "Ten Commandments of Good Business Dealing." For the same production the streamer read, "Read the Ten Commandments that Lead to Happiness," and each advertisement on the page carried a number from one to ten.
- 4. For the photoplay, "The Happy Husband," each merchant emphasized the fact that his customers had happy husbands.
- 5. For "The Pony Express" the page streamer read, "We Have Been in Business Since Pony Express Days."
- 6. For the photoplay, "Cheap Money," the merchants emphasized bargain prices.
- 7. For the photoplay, "Any Woman," the page top announcement read, "Any Woman Would Be Interested in . . ." and this led into the merchants' advertisements beneath.
- 8. For "The Manicure Girl," a page was limited to the advertisements of beauty parlors.
- 9. For the photoplay, "Old Home Week," the page was limited to the merchants who specialized in home furnishings.

Novelties

The title, or the star, or the problem, or the locale of the photoplay all suggest possibilities of a unifying idea that can be mentioned in each merchant's advertisement and thus give a unity to the page. Go over your booking list and you will find many titles which are most appropriate for a co-operative page layout.

An added interest is given the page by including in each advertisement a miniature cut or some other piece of display material.

A name can be included in each advertisement with the announcement that a theatre pass will be offered, upon proper identification, to those who find their name in the merchant's advertisement and bring it to the store. Telephone numbers of customers can also be included in the advertisement of each merchant for the same purpose, and so can automobile license numbers.

Misspelled words with a misspelled word in each merchant's space can be used in a contest, with a prize for those who combine the misspelled words to form a sentence concerning either the photoplay or the policy of a particular merchant.

A prize can be offered for the reader who takes one word from each merchant's advertisement and forms a slogan concerning the production.

A prize can be offered for the reader who writes the title of the production most often from the words combined in each merchant's advertisement.

A two- or three-column cut of the star can be cut into sections, and a section placed in each merchant's space, with a prize awarded for the proper combination of the different pieces.

In some cases where a contest is arranged for the co-operative page, there is the possibility of using the same page twice—once when the contest is announced, and again when the winners' names and the solution is published on the page.

The advantage of such contests is that they insure a more careful reading of the page.

Conclusion.

The newspaper executives are primarily interested in circulation promotion and advertising promotion. To promote circulation they advertise news service and editorial policy; they offer subscription prize awards and premiums; they advertise feature articles, and conduct contests creating reader-interest. The last named is becoming more and more impor-

tant. For this the newspaper's strongest ally is the theatre. In fact, small newspapers with limited prize money and limited art service find the theatre indispensable.

As far as advertising promotion is concerned, although contracts with national advertisers are the newspaper's primary interest, local advertising is important. Of the \$780,000,000 spent last year in newspapers, over \$200,000,000 was national advertising, and over \$500,000,000 was from local advertising, of which department stores were the leading contributors. Many local dealers do not use the newspaper, because they cannot afford display space. The co-operative advertising page arranged by the theatre manager offers display possibilities and other advantages which attract local retailers who otherwise would not use the newspaper. Therefore, the theatre is again the newspaper's strongest ally. Evidently, this does not apply as pertinently to newspapers in our fifteen leading cities as it does to others.

The advantage of co-operative advertising between the theatre and the newspaper, as far as results for the theatre are concerned, cannot be questioned. Here again we have a potent factor for building theatre patronage, which, to be effective, requires the efforts of the individual manager.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE AMUSEMENT PAGE

WHETHER local newspapers carry an amusement page depends upon their appreciation of the reader service value of such a page—and the co-operation of local theatre managers.

Whether there should be an amusement page should not be determined by the theatre advertising carried in the newspaper. Only one thing determines whether the newspaper will carry an amusement page; that one thing is reader interest of such a page and the influence this reader service will have in building circulation for the newspaper.

Managers who request an amusement page with the argument, "Theatres advertise in the newspaper and therefore the newspaper should carry an amusement page," are no more logical than the undertakers would be if they argued, "The undertakers place advertising with the newspaper and therefore the newspaper should carry an undertakers' page."

If there are not more amusement pages, it may be because theatre managers have used the stupid argument, "Because we advertise there should be an amusement page." They have failed to present the only argument which should determine the existence of an amusement page—reader interest in such a page—circulation.

The newspaper executive who argues that the newspaper will carry an amusement page if theatre managers will use larger paid-for advertisements, might just as well argue that the sporting page will carry box scores because the local baseball club buys advertising, or will carry accounts of a championship boxing contest because the boxers or their managers have bought advertising space.

There is a widespread interest in photoplay personalities and photoplays. It is no exaggeration to say that 90 per cent of newspaper readers are interested in motion pictures. The newspaper stories which followed Rudolph Valentino's death

were proof that newspaper executives recognized reader interest in motion-picture news. The space given these stories was not determined by any advertising.

Reader Interest.

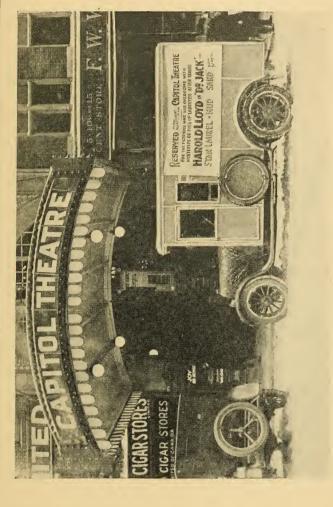
The amusement page is justified by reader interest. The sporting page is justified by reader interest. The woman's page is justified by reader interest. The radio page is justified by reader interest. The society page is justified by reader interest. The automobile page is justified by reader interest.

The more general the reader interest in any of the foregoing, the more reason why the newspaper should carry such a page. It is no exaggeration to say that a larger percentage of readers are interested in the motion picture, than are interested in athletics, society news, radio news, automobile news.

A well-illustrated, newsy, interesting amusement page will build circulation for any newspaper, especially if it is a distinctive feature which one local newspaper offers, and the competitive newspaper does not offer.

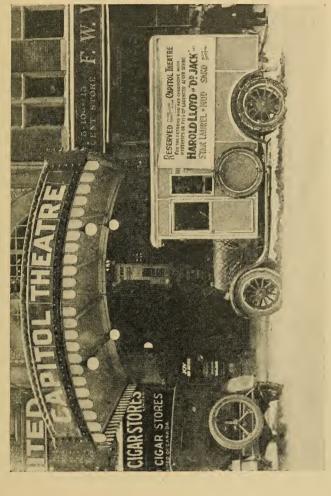
The newspaper is anxious to attract advertisers of products which appeal to women. Women are in the majority of motion-picture fans. An attractive amusement page would increase circulation among women readers. This would mean that advertisers appealing to women would be more interested in that newspaper which, because of an attractive amusement page, had built up a large woman reader circulation. Consider the tremendous circulation of the fan magazines. They carry the very same news items which are available for the local amusement page. Some sell advertising space at over \$1,200 per page. Many products are advertised in fan magazines which are not advertised in newspapers. An attractive amusement page might win for newspapers some of the national and even local advertising which otherwise cannot be secured.

It remains for the local theatre manager to present the case as logically as he can. His arguments are all based on the advantage that will accrue to the newspaper. It might be well to get copies of representative amusement pages from newspapers of other cities to show as examples of what can be done. The theatre manager who "begs" for an amusement page as

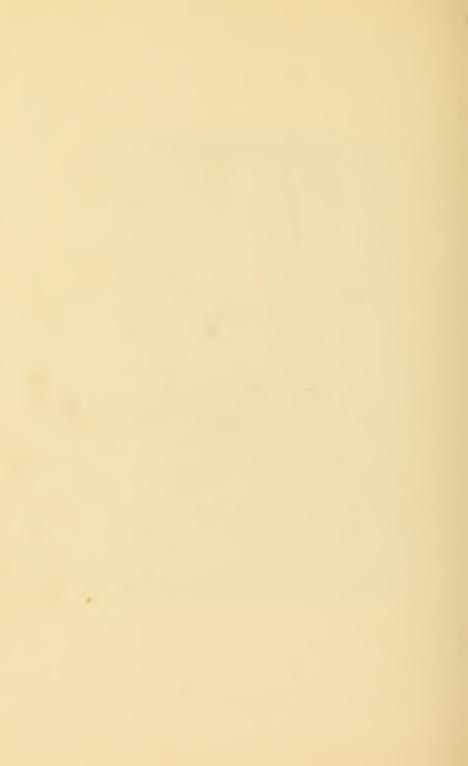


THE AMBULANCE WAITS FOR THE MAN WHO LAUGHS HIMSELF TO DEATH





THE AMBULANCE WAITS FOR THE MAN WHO LAUGHS HIMSELF TO DEATH



though there was no advantage for the newspaper in such a page is usually treated as beggars should be treated.

Co-operation.

Often, when enough newspaper executives finally admit the advantage of an amusement page, the carelessness of local theatre managers, and their failure to understand the newspaper's problem so that sensible, properly prepared news copy will be submitted, cause the page to become so unattractive that it is discarded.

Where there are many theatres in the city, the managers should co-operate for the general improvement of the amusement page, and not hamper its effectiveness by selfishly demanding privileges for their own theatre. The amusement page keeps motion pictures before the minds of the public as do the motion-picture fan magazines. The general news stimulates a general interest in photo-plays which will be beneficial to all theatres. If each manager attempts to emphasize his own programs, and does not do his part to make the general news interesting, the page loses its value in reader interest. When it has no value as far as reader interest is concerned, it should be dropped, and the newspaper may be justified in dropping a page when the attitude of local managers, or their cooperation, is not what it should be. Let the manager sit down and talk the matter over with the amusement page editor. Explain to him the sources of material, and ask his direction concerning what should be sent, how it should be prepared, and when it should be delivered. Follow his direction to the letter. He will explain news values. He knows what readers want.

At a recent convention of newspaper publishers a committee discussed "free publicity." It was agreed that much motion-picture material received at newspaper offices is "either ridiculously silly or too open an attempt at advertising." It was admitted that there is reader interest in well-written, newsy stories; but the opinion was expressed that there are too many generalities, too much exaggeration, too much stereotyped expression, and a failure to understand reader interest, and news values.

If local managers do no more than slip press sheets and general publicity material into an envelope and send it to the newspaper office, they cannot expect that the page will be what it might be. They should not expect the newspaper will assign someone to go through all the material and prepare it for local publication. It is for local managers to select from the flood of news material which reaches them that material which will be of most interest locally. The story should not be sent in stereotyped form. Experienced newspaper men easily detect a cut-and-dried story from the press sheet. It is inadvisable to reprint such stories, because it is likely that the very same story in the very same form will appear in the pages of other newspapers.

The amusement pages of the larger cities are sometimes good examples of how photoplay news can be prepared with reader interest. The fan magazines are also good examples.

Local Interest.

Try to give a local angle to your story. Perhaps one of the cast is a native of the state, or known to members of your community. Perhaps the theme of the photoplay has some bearing on a local problem. There may be incidents or scenes in the picture that have some local relation. It is evident that this local touch cannot be given to the story as it appears in the press sheet, because the press sheet story carries facts which must be reshaped for local consumption. Not only stars and directors who are popular locally will also make good copy, but such things as styles, the Charleston rage, the bobbed hair controversy, etc., can all be used to give real interest to the amusement page stories.

Submitting Copy.

In sending your material to the newspaper office, have it prepared as correct in form as it would be prepared by one of the newspaper's own staff. Each newspaper office has its own routine for such material. Follow that routine. Double-space your copy. Indicate paragraph marks. Blacken out errors heavily. Indicate at the end of each page whether the story is continued on the next page with the standard newspaper

symbol. Have your stories of a length that you know is desirable. Do not send 2,000 words if you know that 300 words are required. Have your material arrive on time. Send along a press sheet, marking technical details as to director, cast, etc., so that they can be properly authenticated in your copy. When sending cuts and mats, letter these carefully on the back, so that they can be identified, and if possible send an illustration of the cut or mat. Write your captions.

Your news story for a particular photoplay should never give a complete synopsis. Rather let it suggest the type of picture and those high-lights which will be particularly interesting locally, and give only enough details about the theme to whet the reader's interest.

The Page.

The majority of newspapers carry an amusement page at least in the Saturday evening and the Sunday editions. You can bring a collection of representative pages from other cities for suggestions. Ideas for making the amusement page more attractive can be obtained by studying other amusement pages.

The banner across the top of the page deserves particular attention. If the same familiar wording is used without change through the year, it loses attention value; for instance, the following page heads are typical of monotonous lines which were not changed throughout the year:

Amusements
At the Theatres
Plays and Players
Local Entertainment
Amusements of the Week
Drama—Vaudeville—Films
News of the Stage and Screen
Offerings of Local Theatres on Stage and Screen

Newspapers that use a decorative cut for the banner can have it so arranged that type can be changed within a decorative border. Then the type message can be seasonal; it can be timely; it can be varied to get headline effects.

If the community is so small and the newspaper so small that an entire page for amusement news does not seem justified, then one-half page or two columns could be used. In the smaller newspaper, the advantage of this would be that advertisers of products purchased by women would favor the newspaper which could offer space adjoining those columns.

Stories.

Stories need not be confined to programs. The theatre itself and its staff, furnish material with which interesting stories can be prepared. The installation of a new organ, training of a staff, the orchestra leader, the organist, etc., can occasionally be subjects of human interest stories. News of previews, of attendance of prominent personages at the theatre, of theatre parties, etc., will also interest.

Novelties.

Many ideas have been used to add interest to the amusement page. Some are indicated here and others are evident from the study of various amusement pages.

Open the columns to letters from readers concerning current programs. These letters have the same reader interest as the letters carried on the editorial page or the letters carried on the woman's page. The local theatre managers can stimulate interest in such columns by occasionally contributing a letter which will suggest other letters from readers. Once the practice of printing letters from readers is started, a sufficient number is easily received to fill the column and make it interesting. It is not expected that these letters will be masterpieces of expression or carry any great ideas. But people like to see their names in print, and like to see that their opinions of photoplays are given space.

A regular unit in some amusement pages is "the theatre calendar." A one-column or two-column panel is carried in which each theatre is listed with a summary of title, cast and type of program. A common heading for this panel is "The Local Movie Menu." This is a reader service, because it makes possible ready reference.

Now and then a contest can be conducted with a prize for the best photoplay criticism prepared by newspaper readers. One newspaper uses this contest once each month and the results are exceptionally gratifying.

A variation of the same idea is to have teachers of English at local schools co-operate, so that pupils prepare reviews of photoplays as a school exercise. The best review is published in the newspaper and a small prize awarded. Teachers of English welcome such contests because their problem is to get subjects for school exercises which will be of interest to the students. The newspaper welcomes such a contest because it develops family interest in the newspaper.

Many of the contests suggested for newspaper advertising co-operation can be carried on the amusement page. Consult Chapter XXIX.

The Motion-Picture Critic.

An intelligently conducted motion picture column for the review of photoplays can be an important feature on any amusement page. Suppose the criticism is unfavorable? Actually very few people will be induced to see a moving picture because of a critic's opinion, and very few are kept away because some over-critical reviewer has spoken disparagingly of a photoplay. Readers appreciate the fact that such criticism is only the personal opinion of the writer. The justification of the column is that it keeps the motion-picture entertainment before the public and is one of those things to which tradition has given a certain value.

Once the newspaper has established a review service, it remains for theatre managers by tactful discussion to give the reviewer the proper attitude. Some reviewers feel that they are critics, and as critics they must criticize something. Too often the review is entrusted to someone with faulty conceptions of the motion-picture critic's function. The critic who thinks that it is his function to apply principles of art and dramatic criticism to a photoplay is on the wrong track. His readers are anxious to know one thing: What is the entertainment value of the photoplay? Entertainment value and not art is the main point. Recently the motion-picture critic of a metropolitan newspaper wrote: "The critic, if he is true to his immemorial function, will remember that, because of

the present status of the motion picture, his express viewpoint will always be dominated by a restless discontent with nearly all films, as produced to-day, and impel him to impress producers, directors, screen artists and audiences that motion pictures have a long and arduous road to travel to reach their artistic goal."

Note the words "artistic goal." Readers are not interested in "artistic goal." They are not interested in theories of cinema art, theories of pantomime or pattern, camera angles, dynamic background, tempo, subtle expression of the director's personality, theories of screen metaphor and screen technique.

The critic who loads his review with discussion of such details is wasting space. The newsy, chatty review, built about "entertainment values," is appreciated by readers. Inasmuch as the newspaper is anxious to give readers what they want, and not to advocate any "artistic" principles, or any high-brow, hair-splitting discussion of theories, the commonsense viewpoint in this matter is soon made evident to newspaper executives.

Sometimes the motion-picture critic is one who attempts to "talk big" about technical details and show off his knowledge. Sometimes, with little knowledge of the photoplay, and little understanding of human nature, he "wise-cracks" and talks big, with one primary objective—to exploit himself. Some of the metropolitan critics who, for some reason or other, have been hired to write reviews of photoplays, forget all about reader service, forget all about entertainment values, and how valuable space is, to show how clever they are. In one case a "clever critic" is running around with a pocketful of scenarios and using the space of newspapers as part of his campaign to convince producers that he is very, very smart. A very wise writer once said, "It is much easier to be critical than to be correct."

There is the memorable case of the photoplay critic who ignored entertainment values in "The Covered Wagon" and used a review to criticize this minor detail: "The canvas tops of the covered wagons appeared white in the photoplay after the long trip across the desert." The critic with great gusto ridiculed the director. The obvious conclusion was that the

critic was much smarter than the director; but the fact of the matter was that the director was correct because the alkali dust of the desert actually makes canvas appear whiter. Therefore "the white canvas tops after the long trip across" was a point of accuracy for which the director should have been commended. Incidentally, there were many entertainment values in the afore-mentioned photoplay, as was later proved by millions of people of every type and every age who enjoyed "The Covered Wagon"—despite the smart critic.

There are other instances where smart critics have called attention to some minor detail. Usually the minor detail was accurate because the research departments of the studios had made sure of the fact. Even if the minor detail was not accurate, the point we are making is that it is not minor flaws, but rather entertainment values, to which the reviewer should give attention.

If you want, as a guide, ideal examples of common-sense photoplay reviews, read those carried by "The Photoplay Magazine," or read the reviews in the trade papers.

Conclusion.

It is no exaggeration to say that newspaper readers in many cases select one newspaper rather than another simply because photoplay criticisms are really serviceable, and the amusement page as a whole is a newspaper's distinctive feature, something which no other local newspaper can offer.

It is something which determines circulation.

An effective amusement page cannot be built up in a week. It takes months of hard work, hard thinking, tactful handling, and co-operation, not only to bring it to a high standard, but to keep it there. The advantage to the newspaper of such an amusement page is evident. Its value to the theatre is evident. It remains for the theatre managers to present the matter clearly to local newspaper executives, and then by effective co-operation to help keep it at a standard which will help circulation—a standard that, like any other circulation-building influence of a newspaper, is based on service to its readers.

CHAPTER XXIX

HOLIDAYS AND LOCAL CELEBRATIONS

EVERY holiday, national or local, local celebrations, and important local events afford the enterprising manager an opportunity to increase receipts.

At the time of such holidays and occasions, the community is thinking in terms of the holiday or of the occasion, and will respond to appeals that are directed to the existing sentiment. The program or special feature that is timely, because it is in the spirit of the holiday or the occasion, is better appreciated. Advertising that is timely because the spirit of its message appeals to the existing interest or sentiment will be more effective.

The theatre is for the holiday what the churches are for religious holidays. The theatre is better able to attract those who are anxious to celebrate in the spirit of the holiday than any other institution. People really look to the theatre as the institution that recognizes holiday and local celebrations. By fostering this holiday spirit the theatre not only increases its attendance but it becomes better recognized as an institution.

Possibilities.

The full possibilities of capitalizing on the existing holiday spirit are not gained by a feeble attempt at adding a few holiday decorations during the Christmas season or displaying the flag on patriotic holidays. This is not enough. Decorative effects, color schemes, lobby displays, musical numbers, stage novelties, the illustration and message of newspaper advertising, even the type of feature picture to be booked, can all be considered from the viewpoint of the holiday. The more holidays and the more local occasions that are considered, the more opportunities the manager has for increasing receipts. Attendance depends in a way upon the novelty of appeal. That appeal is more novel and more effective which ties-in

with a sentiment or a matter of interest which at the moment holds the attention of the community.

Preparation.

The reason why the opportunity offered by holidays and outstanding local events is not used more generally is that there is not sufficient advance preparation. The manager realizes too late that another holiday has approached. He did not have available materials and information that could be used in appealing to the existing interest. That is why it is well to keep a file of holiday material. This file can be indexed for all the holidays and occasions on which the manager can capitalize.

Files.

Under each holiday heading, file general information concerning the holiday, suggestions for decorative effects, flower and symbol decorations, ideas for color schemes, musical numbers, ideas for lobby display, slogans and decorative effects for newspaper advertising, outlines for stage novelties, etc.

The manager can collect much of this material from the trade papers, from popular magazines, from newspaper advertising of other institutions, from catalogues, and from reports of how the holiday was observed in the operation of other managers. If he is constantly on the alert to gather ideas for a holiday file, he will come across usable material even in the most unexpected places.

It takes time to build up such a file; but the material can be collected for each holiday as it comes along. Then, when the holiday is celebrated the following year, at least some information and material will be available. Posters are a fruitful source of material. Flag displays, war scenes, and other poster illustrations can be saved for holiday use. One manager has collected such material and makes very attractive lobby displays for Armistice Day, July Fourth, Patriots' Day and Memorial Day.

Study the catalog of the newspaper cut and mat service which is used by local newspapers.

Here are the commonly known holidays and occasions which offer the theatre an opportunity to build receipts by timely booking, by decorative effects and by advertising in the spirit of the holiday or the occasion:

- 1. New Year's Day.
- 2. Theatre Anniversary.
- 3. Newspaper Day.
- 4. Education Week.
- 5. St. Valentine Day.
- 6. Lincoln's Birthday.
- 7. Washington's Birthday.
- 8. Laugh Month.
- 9. Drama Week.
- 10. St. Patrick's Day.
- 11. Better Homes Week.
- 12. Be-Kind-to-Animals Week.
- 13. Easter.
- 14. Mother's Day.
- 15. Arbor Day.
- 16. Father-and-Son Day.
- 17. Music Week.
- 18. May Day.
- 19. Lee's Birthday.
- 20. Memorial Day.
- 21. Father's Day.
- 22. Boys' Week.
- 23. Garden Week.
- 24. Flag Day.
- 25. Patriots' Day.
- 26. Golden Rule Sunday.
- 27. School Graduation Day.
- 28. July Fourth.
- 29. Greater Movie Season.
- 30. Boy Scout Week.
- 31. Labor Day.
- 32. Rosh Hashanah.
- 33. Paramount Week.
- 34. Reopening of Schools.

- 35. Columbus Day.
- 36. Navy Day.
- 37. Country Fair Day.
- 38. National Book Week.
- 39. Apple Week.
- 40. Election Day.
- 41. Armistice Day.
- 42. Hallowe'en.
- 43. Thanksgiving.
- 44. Christmas.

Local Holidays.

Besides the generally recognized holidays, each community has other occasions which offer possibilities—the dedication of a new monument, the opening of a new institution, the anniversary of the city's founding, conventions, the anniversary of events that have local historical interest, the visit of some distinguished personage, the anniversary celebrations of local institutions, and public holidays which are celebrated locally, such as the Battle of New Orleans (New Orleans), Lee's Birthday (for nine of the Southern States), Admission Day (Arizona), Houston Memorial Day (Texas), Shrove Tuesday (Florida and Louisiana), Maryland Day (Maryland), State Election Day, Confederate Memorial Day, Pioneer Day (Idaho), and Lafayette Day.

Not only the national holidays, and not only important local holidays, but minor events that have a particular interest in certain sections of the community should be considered. For instance, certain local societies celebrate Founder's Day. Certain schools and colleges have student holidays. There are big feature bargain sales at certain seasons in the department stores. These stores follow a general monthly schedule in reference to seasonal window displays, and the manager should be familiar with local practices. For instance, the general schedule is as follows:

- 1. January... Clearance sales in holiday and winter merchandise.
- 2. February.. Advanced spring merchandise.

- 3. March.....Spring displays leading up to Easter fashions.
- 4. April.... Home furnishings, such as furniture, carpets, curtains, etc.; also display of garden tools and spring apparel.
- 5. May..... Advance showing of summer merchandise.
- 6. June.....Bride displays and wedding gift merchandise.
- 7. July..... Bathing equipment, and camping equipment.
- 8. August.... Toys; athletic equipment; fiction.
- 9. September. . School merchandise; special sales.
- 10. October . . . Fall styles.
- 11. November. . China; linen; winter merchandise.
- 12. December. . Christmas display.

Perhaps the newspapers give recognition annually to some occasion. The manager's knowledge of community affairs will acquaint him with such possibilities.

Flag Display.

Patriotic holidays should never be overlooked; the very least the theatre can do is to display the flag. Much unfavorable criticism has been provoked by the incorrect display of the flag at theatres. The theatre manager should be familiar with regulations governing flag display. For this reason the following rules are suggested:

- 1. Either fly the flag, freely unfurled, from a staff, or hang it flat, its full horizontal or vertical length falling evenly, with the starry field at the top and to the observer's left.
- 2. Whether indoors or out, the flag should never be fashioned into a rosette, bow-knot, etc., or used as draping. Use bunting.
- 3. Hoist the flag briskly; lower it slowly and ceremoniously, never permitting its folds to touch the ground.

- 4. At crossed staffs with another flag, it should be on the observer's left, its staff in front of the other staff.
- 5. In a cluster, the National flag should be in the center or at the highest point in the group.
- 6. Suspended across the street between two rows of buildings, the flag should be hung vertical, with the starry field to the north in an east-and-west street and to the east in a north-and-south street.
- 7. In a procession, the National flag should be on the marching right of all other flags, or if there is a line of flags, in front of the center of that line.
- 8. When flown at half-staff, the flag should be run to the peak and then lowered; before lowering for the day, it should be again run to the peak.
- 9. Never permit Old Glory to be used as a handkerchief, as part of an athletic costume, or other manner lacking in the respect due it as the living symbol of America.

Calendar.

Unless some advance notice is taken of the coming holiday, sufficient preparation cannot be made. Therefore it is advisable to have a "warning calendar" notifying the manager two or more weeks in advance. The following is a summary of the notations carried on such a "warning calendar" by a manager who made every effort to tie-in his operation with local events (the date given is that of the event as listed two or more weeks in advance):

- Oct. 23—High School football game. (Book photoplay of college life.)
- Oct. 25—Convention of Railroad Engineers. (Preview of railroad photoplay for delegates, with letters of endorsement, etc.)
- Oct. 26—Monthly meeting of Women's Club. (Discuss influence of motion picture in education, including sales talk on photoplay booked next week idealizing mother sacrifice.)
- Oct. 27—Newspaper campaign on "City Boosting." (See editor about tie-up possibilities with theatre.)

- Oct. 28—Saturday Evening Post issue carries Paramount National advertising of photoplay soon to be shown at theatre. (Have heralds inserted by newsboys with play date, etc.)
- Oct. 29—Meeting of College Debating Society; proposition for debate has connection with a photoplay booked. (Arrange for distribution of heralds.)
- Oct. 30—Hallowe'en. (Hallowe'en stage presentation, Hallowe'en lobby display, theatre donate prize for Hallowe'en party at orphanage, etc.)
- Nov. 1—Apple Week starts. (Book picture of farm life and use mailing list to reach patronage in rural districts; apple matinee for children.)
- Nov. 2—Election Day. (Distribute heralds at street meetings addressed by nominees for coming election. Election returns bulletin at theatre; midnight matinee.)
- Nov. 3—Fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Brown's Department Store. (Send letter of congratulation, and arrange contest for employees of store with theatre party to winner.)
- Nov. 4—Monthly meeting of directors of libraries is held to-day. (Arrange for book displays at libraries.)
- Nov. 5—Local dance hall masquerade dance. (Arrange for impersonation contest.)
- Nov. 6—College football game. (Distribute heralds at stadium and use ballyhoos between halfs.)
- Nov. 8—State convention of Elks. (Use Elks flag, colors and lodge symbols on marquee.)
- Nov. 10—New dance academy opens. (Arrange with manager for performances at children's matinees.)
- Nov. 11—Armistice Day. (Book war picture. Gold Star mothers guests of theatre. Boy Scouts in parade after distribution of heralds. Flag displayed. War trophies from American Legion Post for lobby display.)

- Nov. 13—Arrange window tie-up with chain store executive who arrives from New York for conference with local managers.
- Nov. 15—Agitation starts for landing field in city. (Tieup with aeroplane photoplay to be shown early next month.)
- Nov. 16—Local newspaper announces a new comic strip of the same subject as shown in short subject series booked for theatre. (Arrange tie-up.)
- Nov. 17—Book store announces special sale photoplay editions of novels. (Arrange tie-up with those booked at theatre.)
- Nov. 19—Chamber of Commerce meeting. (Invitation for five-minute talk, "How the Theatre Helps Local Business.")
- Nov. 20—Film star to visit the city. (Arrange "readers" for amusement page.)
- Nov. 22—Convention, Parent Teachers' Association. (Be sure that appropriate photoplay is booked for this date. Avoid what would offend.)
- Nov. 25—Thanksgiving Day. (Lobby display; special stage number; display official proclamation in lobby; use Thanksgiving touches in ads.)

It is evident that the manager who follows local events closely and looks ahead with one eye on his booking schedule and another eye on the possibilities of tying-in his merchandising and general operation with events and matters of exceptional timely interest will not only establish his theatre as an institution—but actually sell tickets that otherwise would not be sold, because the timeliness of his appeal made it more effective.

CHAPTER XXX

COLOR

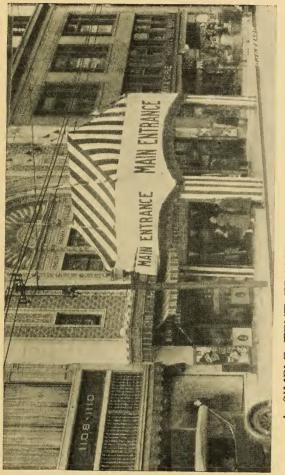
ALTHOUGH the subject of color is very much involved, and the matter is one which is mastered more by actual experience than by study of formulas, there are certain fundamental principles with which the manager should be familiar. The proper use of color affects many details of operation.

Theatre decorations should be seasonal, restful, in good taste, and attractive. This is a matter of color. Effective theatre lighting of every kind involves the application of principles of color. Seasonal changes for the theatre also depend upon changes in color. Effective advertising in many forms depends upon effective use of color.

Color influences the emotions. We know from our own experience that different colors suggest different moods and different mental attitudes. For instance, light green suggests springtime, balmy coolness, and outdoors; red suggests danger, war, fire, and passion. There are so-called "cool" colors, such as green, blue, purple, and the combinations of blue-green, purple-green, and red-purple. There are so-called "warm" colors, such as red, orange, and yellow, with the combinations yellow-red and light yellow-green. There are so-called "neutral" colors whose emotional influence is relatively weak, such as gray, light silver, and light gold.

The suggestion value of different colors can be summarized as follows:

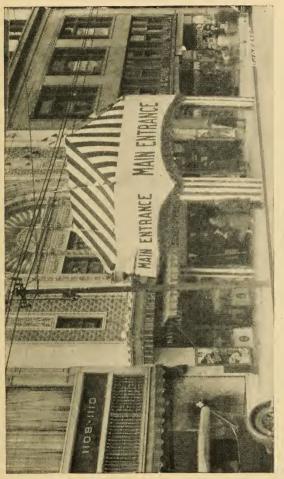
- 1. Black suggests gloom, sadness, sorrow, and death.
- Gold suggests power, glory, achievement, conquest, and glamour.
- 3. Red suggests excitement, heat, danger, passion, blood, fierceness, conflict, fire, and war.
- 4. Green suggests rest, hope, refreshment, quiet, vitality, and productiveness.
- 5. Blue suggests serenity, coldness, constancy, extensiveness, distance, and dignity.



A SIMPLE TENT FRONT FOR A CIRCUS PICTURE

This effect is very simply achieved, but it may be elaborated into a complete screen for the entire marquise, with openings for the pedestrians. Where local ordinances forbid, the tent can be taken into the lobby. Tents are equally useful for Arabic plays. For circus stories a lemonade stand may be added.





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- 6. Yellow suggests action, warmth, joy, envy, and treachery.
- 7. Rose suggests love, beauty, hope, and health.

Preferences.

The preferences of men and women for different colors has been determined by tests. These tests rank colors in the following order as the preference of men—brown, red, violet, white, orange, yellow, green; and in the following order as the preference of women—red, violet, green, brown, white, orange, yellow. As far as prejudice is concerned the colors are ranked for men as follows—yellow, orange, green, brown, violet, red, white; for women—orange, brown, green violet, red, yellow and white.

Color in Advertising.

Experiments have proved conclusively that color in advertising, besides giving distinction, seasonal appeal, and harmonizing with the product advertised, also carries more attention value than black and white display. The manager need not worry about the selection of color for the supplied advertising materials in color, such as posters, banners, window cards, lobby cards, heralds, etc. Color effects in these are usually the best that leading commercial artists can give.

However, in arranging cut-out displays of this material, the manager must apply certain principles of color. For instance, the background against which this colored material will be displayed can be such that the attractiveness of the cut-out will be enhanced, or of such a color that the appeal will be negatived. This is a matter of color contrast. Silver or gold backgrounds accompany most colors very well and lend a richness and warmth. However, red on a green background seems to lose its brilliance, especially when displayed under dim light. Contrast is important. Dark colors against a light background seem darker. Light colors against a dark background seem lighter. The importance of background is evident by comparing the same shade of gray as it appears against a white and as against a black background. On the black background

the gray will seem lighter than it does against a white back-ground.

Back-Grounds.

Cut-out stills against colored cardboard, wallpaper, gilt or linoleum backgrounds can have their photographic qualities either enhanced or dulled. Some stills are lighter than others. In selecting background for your stills, use samples from a color book and note the different effects of different colors before you make your selection. Careless selection of a panel background has spoiled what would otherwise be an attractive display.

Distance Legibility.

Window cards and lobby panels are sometimes prepared at the theatre. For both of these it must be remembered that intricate art work and fancy lettering are not essentials. Three things should be considered: the display should get attention, should be legible in every detail, and the colors used should help the buying influence. As far as distance legibility is concerned, the combinations rank in the following order: black on yellow, green on white, red on white, blue on white, white on blue.

A good rule to follow is not to have more than three colors on any one poster or announcement card. Use sparingly the primary colors—red, yellow, and blue. This means that these colors should not be used over a large area for lettering. A single line or an initial letter in a primary color will often give a better effect than many lines of lettering in a primary color. The other colors are preferably used when wide areas of lettering must be colored.

Of course, your poster colors should be seasonal in appeal and, where possible, harmonize with the general tone of the photoplay advertised.

The Production of Color Light.

White light contains all the primary colors. A particular color is secured from a white light source by screening out the other colors.

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If red light is desired, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet are screened out. If blue-green light is desired, the red, orange, and yellow rays are screened out. To remove any of the color rays it is necessary to pass the white light through some medium that absorbs the other rays. A piece of red glass or gelatin will absorb orange, yellow, green-blue, and violet and transmit red light. It is evident, therefore, that when color is secured from a white light source, nothing is added, but the other light rays are absorbed. Consequently, in securing color from a white light source, there is bound to be some loss of light. In order to obtain the same intensity of illumination with colored lights, more wattage must be used than would be needed for the same intensity of white light. The following table indicates the loss of light when colored effects are secured from a white light source:

Color	Absorption Per cent	Transmission Per cent
Red Orange Yellow Green Blue Purple	70–50 40–20 80–90 95–90	15-25 30-50 60-80 10-20 5-10 2- 5

To produce the same intensity of illumination with colored light as was had with white light the wattage must be increased approximately 5 times for red, 8 times for green, 14 times for blue, 25 times for purple, $1\frac{1}{2}$ times for yellow and $2\frac{1}{2}$ times for orange. This increase is the general average; but the average varies according to conditions of the color medium, the conditions of the white light source, and the distance the light must be thrown.

When colored light strikes a colored object, the reflection varies according to the color of the object and the color of the light. For instance, red light falling on a red object will be reflected with its full value; but red light falling on a green object will be absorbed, and the object will reflect no light but appear black. If red light falls on a yellow object, the object will appear red. To secure the proper effect, experiment is required for every condition, because there are so many

varying factors to be considered. This is mentioned because stage effects and others for which the manager is responsible cannot be worked out by rapid formula, but require experiment and adjustment.

Color Media.

Color media used in the theatre include sprayed coatings on lamps, lamp dips, silk fabrics, metal foil, gelatins, colored paper and colored cloth. The use of transparent lamp dips has the disadvantage that the dyes are organic and are not permanent when exposed to continuous heat. The dye fades or becomes discolored, especially with lamps of higher wattage. Accordingly, it is suggested that the manager communicate with the lamp coloring or chemical company supplying the dyes used for lamp dips, because many economies are possible by following the suggestions given for the proper use of lamp dips.

Outdoor Use.

Outdoor use of superficial lamp coatings has certain limitations. Red, when exposed to the sun and rain, has a tendency to fade. In summer, the color life of red-coated lamps is about six weeks, while in the winter it is about ten weeks. Blue-coated lamps maintain a satisfactory color for about three months, but during the winter months this average is cut down by the effect of snow and ice. The average color life of blue-coated lamps is about 960 hours. The most satisfactory color coatings for outdoor use, from the viewpoint of permanency, are green, yellow, amber, and orange.

A record should be kept of the performance of color-coated lamps for outdoor use, so that replacements can be made effectively. If individual replacements are made, a spotty effect is the result, because the new lamps, in contrast with the others, have a different strength. Therefore, if new lamps cannot be matched with others, it is better to relamp the entire sign at one time rather than make repeated individual replacements.

There is usually much waste when superficially colored lamps are stored away. If these lamps are piled on top of Color 379

each other without any protection for the bare lamps, the metallic base will scratch the covering. Coated lamps of high wattage are not recommended for outdoor use, because rain and cold cause them to crack unless they are protected from the weather. Natural colored lamps are practically indestructible as far as the colors are concerned. These are available in the following colors: blue, green, amber, and ruby. The superficially colored lamps are available in red, blue, green, yellow, amber, orange, flame-tint, and ivory.

Stage Lighting.

The use of gelatins as a standard medium is most satisfactory. Gelatins are obtainable in fifty standard colors, tints, and blends. They are relatively inexpensive and make possible the most delicate gradations of color. Used in varied thicknesses, they give a depth of color. Many novel light effects have been secured by experiment with gelatins. Because gelatins are extremely susceptible to moisture and temperature, extreme care should be used in their handling. They are stored best in a cool, moist atmosphere. Before using gelatin in a frame, it should be crinkled to allow for shrinkage when the heat dries it. The gelatin dealers will supply information for the use and maintenance of gelatins; for instance, how to repair pin-holes, how to repair creases, etc.

Selection.

In selecting color-producing media, five factors should be considered. These are: purity, permanency, efficiency, facility of usage, and availability. For color purity the types can be ranked in the following order: glass plates, gelatin screens, transparent dip, natural color bulb, glass color caps, color spray. For color permanency, the ranking is as follows: natural color bulbs, color spray, colored glass caps, opaque dip, transparent dip. For efficiency, the ranking is: transparent dip, gelatin screens, natural color bulbs, opaque dips, color spray. For facility of use or ease in manipulation, the ranking is: color spray, opaque dips, natural color bulbs, gelatin screens, fabrics, and foils. Availability depends upon the proximity of your supply houses and their stock on hand.

Conclusion.

If color is to be used to best advantage in theatre operation both for stage work, decoration and advertising, a knowledge of the suggestion appeal of different colors, plus the few fundamental principles outlined here is not sufficient. Experiment with an eye on the local conditions is necessary. Mere theory in a matter like this does not carry very far. It is, of course, essential that the manager realize the importance of color. This importance is determined right at the box office. It is not a matter of fancy frills or theoretical idealism. The color scheme both of theatre decoration and theatre advertising should never get into a rut. Novelty and variety are essential.

Many helpful ideas can be picked up by observing color effects and novel color combinations used by decorators and by advertisers of other products. If the manager lacks what is called "color taste" he can rely on the advice and suggestions of those who have it. A very helpful device at any theatre is a color chart which can be purchased cheaply. This indicates the efficiency of different color combinations and suggests answers for problems of harmony and contrast. Proper use of color does not involve heavy expenditure. The most novel color effects are possible at a minimum of expense. Inasmuch as the proper use of color can be an important factor in building theatre patronage, it should be given the careful consideration it deserves.

CHAPTER XXXI

MUSIC

MUSIC at the motion-picture theatre is one of the leading builders of theatre patronage.

The time has long since passed when, even in smaller theatres, music to accompany the photoplay can be carelessly selected and carelessly rendered without affecting attendance. Patrons generally are now more appreciative and more discriminating. Music in the motion-picture theatre, and the radio have developed this appreciation. Consequently, the superior entertainment value of the orchestra or organ music at a theatre actually takes patronage away from competitive theatres which are inferior in this important detail.

It is not our purpose here to enter into any thorough discussion of music. There are standard books on the subject of music for motion-picture theatres. It is our purpose only to call attention to certain high-lights in their relation to theatre patronage, especially as they affect the theatre manager's supervision.

The Manager.

The theatre manager is not required to be a musician. However, co-operation, helpful suggestions, and tactful diplomatic assistance in music problems by the manager himself are often responsible for improved conditions.

Supervision of the capable manager should include maintenance of the organ, adherence to program schedule, light and color change schedules, union regulations, proper coordination between the projection room and the pit, promptness of rehearsals, previews, program arrangement, suggestions for holiday programs, equipment of the music library, correcting glare from the pit, developing in the musicians an interest in the theatre's welfare.

In the larger de luxe theatres, where a musical director is devoting his entire attention to every detail of music, the man-

ager's activities need not be so extensive. But even here the manager, because of his closer contact with patrons, and because of the vantage point for observation which his position offers, can be helpful. In smaller theatres, where so much depends upon the showmanship of the manager, he has countless opportunities.

Development.

There is no doubt that music helps the entertainment value of a photoplay. At the early nickelodeons, a big drum outside the store show and the voice of the barker were used to attract patrons. But the photoplays were run in silence. Then came the piano. This was used to entertain patrons before the picture started. Later on, scores were made to accompany the photoplay, but requiring considerable improvising by the pianist. Then to the pianist was added a violinist and a drummer. But for a long time this trio made no pretense to select music which would be appropriate for what was shown on the screen. Even when five-reelers were first produced, there was little attempt at interpretation and synchronization.

"The Birth of a Nation" marked the initial attempt at a fully synchronized score for a photoplay. Overtures were generally unknown. Until the opening of the Strand Theatre, New York, with its 35-piece orchestra, which introduced overtures, no serious attempt was made to have the music interpret the feature, the news reel, and other program units.

Cue Sheets.—In 1914 music cue sheets, listing the cues which indicated where the music should be changed, and carrying a list of selections suitable for different scenes, were in general distribution. Now cue sheets are available for nearly every feature photoplay. These cue sheets are prepared by the country's leading experts. They are prepared with an understanding of the theatre's problems, and with an attempt to suit the selections to libraries of average size. It remains for the manager to see that cue sheets reach the theatre on time when this service is available. Careless cueing and careless improvising can often be traced to the neglect of the manager who failed to provide the standard cue sheets. With the assistance of these cue sheets, with a well-equipped library,

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with capable musicians, and with previews and rehearsals, music can be brought to a high standard and in a considerable way improve the tone of the program. The quality of a theatre's music does not depend upon its size or upon the size of the orchestra. There are 25-piece orchestras which are a detriment to the theatre. Then there are three-piece orchestras whose music actually brings patrons to the theatre, regardless of the rest of the program.

Importance.

Good music enhances the entertainment value of any program. The most exceptional program can be spoiled by poor music; but it should be remembered that, important as music is, the musical accompaniment of the photoplay is secondary and not paramount. Music should accompany and not predominate. It should never distract. An accompaniment that is too noisy is distracting. The influence of the music accompaniment should be subconscious. The closer it is to perfection, the less direct attention it attracts, because it is so close to the movement and the spirit of the photoplay that it brings the audience along with the action to an even greater emotional response. A conflict between the music and the screen, or the evident effort of musicians to attract attention to themselves or to their music, is detrimental.

Recreation.

People do not visit the motion picture theatre for a musical education. The motion picture theatre is not a rival of the concert hall. The majority of people in the audience are tired after a hard day's work. They want recreation and entertainment. Remember that the majority of patrons are not "high-brows." Classical music which is beyond their appreciation should be avoided. Classical music lovers who appreciate fine technique are in the minority. Music can be melodious and simple and generally understandable—and yet be classical. The long, heavy classical selections may be endured peaceably by the audience; the audience may not fidget; they may not talk; they may even try to applaud politely. But notice the very evident sigh of relief when the long, heavy

classical selection is over. It is reactions like these which the theatre manager can notice. He is interested in details of operation as they relate to the box office.

The musicians may be interested in music as an art, rather than in its influence upon attendance. Therefore, the tactful manager can make suggestions based on his knowledge of patrons' preference, and if he does it tactfully, the music will be what patrons want. After all, showmanship depends upon giving people what they want, and not upon giving them what they should want according to some theoretical principles of music.

Orchestra Combinations.

Small orchestras so common in theatres should not attempt to play selections which have been arranged for symphony orchestras. Many defects can be traced to the failure to realize that the music rendered is not orchestrated for the size and combination of orchestra which is playing it.

Another cause of defect is improper combination. For the three-man orchestra, the best combination is piano, violin, and cello. Variety can be secured by using the violin for solos. Further variety is possible by playing the instruments on mute, then the pianist can solo with a countermarch by the violinist. The cello can also solo. Thus, with a three-piece orchestra, variety is possible. The same variety is possible with other combinations indicated here. If a cello player is not available locally, the clarinet can be substituted. For the four-piece orchestra the best combination is piano, violin, cello, and clarinet (a flute can be substituted for the cello). For the five-piece orchestra the best combination is piano, violin, cello, clarinet, and drum. A drum with a complete set of traps proves very useful for novel sound effects if not overworked. With the above combination it is preferable to have the leader play the piano or the violin, rather than any other instrument. For the six-piece orchestra the combination suggested is piano, violin, cello, clarinet, drum and cornet (a flute can be substituted for the clarinet). A cornet in so small a combination should be muted. For the eight-piece orchestra a bass can be added. For the nine-piece orchestra a trombone can be

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added. For the ten-piece orchestra, another first violin can be added.

The combinations suggested above are suitable only when vaudeville is not shown in addition to photoplays. Evidently, brass and drums are necessary in the orchestra which accompanies vaudeville.

Library.

Synchronization of music for the photoplay is possible by following the standard cue sheets. However, a sufficiently equipped music library is necessary. This is a matter which deserves the manager's attention. Where music is furnished by the theatre, the requests of musicians for new pieces should be carefully considered. The manager taking an interest in this problem should avoid two extremes: being penny-wise and dollar-foolish by unreasonably refusing reasonable requests, or acceding to every demand for new music whether it is justified or not.

Do not put off too long the equipment of a music library. You may be losing patrons by this neglect. Of course, there is no reason why a small theatre should require the heavily equipped library which is needed in the metropolitan de luxe theatres. However, music libraries are available to the trade at a reasonable cost, and are within the budget possibilities of small theatres.

The cataloguing of the music library is important. The most generally used method is that of filing selections according to moods. A cross-reference system can be used when parts of the same selection are suitable for different moods. The following headings are suggested for the mood file:

agitato for fire agitato for storm agitato for battle agitato for crowd movement American andante sentiment bacchanale ballet	blues caprice children Chinese collegiate conversational dance classic descriptive dramatic English	festival fox trot French gallop grotesque German Hawaiian humorous Hungarian hunting
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hvmns nocturne romance Irish oriental ruhe Italian Scotch pastoral Spanish pathetic iazz marches Polish tango pulsating valse marine reveries western mystery

It is well to mark music with the date of purchase and the dates of use, so that the same pieces will not be played too often. Variety is essential.

Preferences

Very often a change can be made in the standard cue sheet so that a selection which is very popular locally can be substituted as the theme. A love theme, especially, offers a possibility of using something which is locally popular. To gauge the musical preference of your audience, visit the local hotels and notice the selections which are best received. Go to the music stores and find out the kind of music the community is buying. Go to other places of entertainment and see what music is applauded. Keep in touch with radio programs, and notice what pieces are requested most often. If you are playing a second-run program, you can keep a record of the music played at the first-run theatre, with a note of its audience reaction, and this will help in arranging your music score for the same program.

The News Reel.

No standard cue sheet is available for the news reel. However, this unit depends more for success upon appropriate accompaniment than any other. It is ridiculous to play one selection during the entire news reel issue. Each unit usually requires a change in music. It is here that showmanship can show at its best. By appropriate music accompaniment a news reel can be made an outstanding unit of the program. Evidently, it must be previewed. In theatres where this is not possible, the organist or the orchestra can at least make notes during the first theatre showing in the afternoon, so that at later performances there will not be aimless improvising, but real accompaniment.

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Order of Units.—The order of units in the news reel is important. In many cases the order of the units as received from the exchange must be altered. Fair business dealing requires that the news reel go back to the exchange with the units in the order in which they were delivered. But there is no reason why units cannot be arranged for showing at the theatre.

In preparing this order, strive for variety and climax. Throughout the news reel there should be contrast of fast and slow, or loud and soft, moving from an interesting and exciting start to an enthusiastic climax. The news reel should open with a bang-with a racing scene, or something with rapid movement and excitement. A slow-moving unit makes a poor start. No set order can be given, because the different issues vary in their contents. However, the principle of variety and contrast can be suggested. After the rapid start, a humorous unit can follow; then perhaps something military; then perhaps a water scene, and so on through the issue, following fast with slow and loud with soft. The concluding unit should be something patriotic or military, so that the climax will be impressive. Nothing is so ineffective as the news reel which closes with a slow, uninteresting, draggy unit. A fast beginning and a vigorous climax to close, with intermediate units arranged with contrast, is ideal.

The news reel should be cued so accurately that accompaniment does not overlap for different units. Proper coordination between projection speed and orchestra or organ timing will make this possible.

The selection of music for the news reel is important. The indiscriminate use of marches leads to abuse. There are three kinds of march selections: One is appropriate for political meetings; one is appropriate for receptions, and one is appropriate for military marches. The six-eight march is appropriate for military movement because it suggests the tramp, tramp of marching soldiers. It is not appropriate for crowd meetings. The processional march, because of its dignity and power, although not suited for military movement, is appropriate for crowd gatherings. Marches are too slow for racing scenes. Gallops, with quick movements, are more suitable.

The waltz is over-used; it is suitable for quiet water scenes, landscapes or flower scenes, but is not appropriate for many other units—for instance, animal scenes. Music should then be used which suggests restlessness of spirit, or comedy music may be appropriate. Foreign scenes are best accompanied by music of the nationality represented. This does not mean necessarily the national anthems, but rather music in the spirit of the country. Historical units suggest music of the period portrayed. For units showing patriotic holidays, war selections, which are still familiar, are suggested.

Although it is a good practice to avoid neutral music, there are some news reel units which, because they lack definite character, do not lose by being accompanied by neutral music.

This is but a sketchy outline of possibilities. The most helpful guide is a record of the music selected for news reel units as played by leading theatres. A record of these, covering a long period of time, is a most practical guide.

Overture.

It is relatively easy for the symphony 40-piece orchestra with capable musicians to make the overture interesting, provided their selection is not so "high-brow" that it is above the understanding of the audience. The problem for the tenpiece orchestra and smaller orchestras is serious. It is very serious when they attempt big, heavy overtures which can be effectively rendered only by large orchestras giving the volume and strength and rounded tone of many instruments. The size of the orchestra and its combination should be considered in selecting overtures. The smaller orchestra selections by Victor Herbert, and light, familiar selections from Verdi operas, and the suggestions carried with standard music libraries for smaller theatres should be preferred. You do not impress your patrons by imitating the overture selections of larger theatres with larger orchestras. Take your lesson from the Easter parade. The little girl with the simple frock, who doesn't try to load on all the heavy, elaborate decorations, including perhaps the kitchen stove, not only gets attention, but gets approval which is not given to those others in the parade who try to carry what they weren't built to carry.

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Remember, too, that audiences like to hear old Southern tunes, old English tunes and old American tunes—because they are familiar, and because they bring back enjoyable memories. What you are selling is enjoyment. You are not selling musical education. The smaller your orchestra, the more you must keep an eye on the audience for whom they play. What good does it do if five people in your audience of a thousand remark, "That rendition of 'William Tell' is almost as good as the rendition given by the local symphony orchestra"? What do the other 995 patrons think? Here again, as in so many other details selected for public appeal, we find that when one aims for simplicity he is aiming straight for effectiveness.

Color.

The overture can very often be made more effective by the use of color and light. We know the simple principle that different colors suggest different moods. Different music suggests different moods. If the color scheme is in harmony with the music mood of a selection, the emotional reaction is far more intense. Many managers are making an attempt at color accompaniment to the overture. This does not mean changes in the chandelier lighting. This does not mean flooding the audience with light, because color light will be absorbed on the black garments of the audience. It might mean flooding the orchestra area with light, especially if the musicians wear white.

Generally, it means using a curtain which will carry color changes from border lights, strips, footlights, and angle floods. Evidently, it is impossible to select a color change which will interpret every minute change in every selection. However, a color might suggest the entire mood of the overture. As the overture moves to climax, the color can be intensified. Minor themes within the selection can be interpreted by different colors.

If the theatre program carries in synopsis form what can be called "the story" of the overture, with an explanation of the attempts being made to interpret this story in color, not only more attention will be aroused, but more appreciation also for the overture. Perhaps some day, music cues will carry color cues for overtures. Until that time, experimentation at the switchboard and dimmers is suggested.

Holidays.

Local holidays and national holidays suggest many possibilities for making overtures effective. Patriotic holidays, especially, are rich in possibilities. Remember that the audience comes to the theatre on the holiday to express themselves in the spirit of the occasion. The overture which is timely and which harmonizes with their spirit will be appreciated. Notice the possibilities for Mother's Day, St. Valentine's Day, Labor Day, Christmas, etc.

Local schools, local colleges, and local clubs have their own marches. When rendered occasionally by the theatre orchestra, these are preferred to the so-called "classical," selections. For instance, the overture for the program which carries the photoplay of college life could be the local college march; and yet we find this possibility overlooked because someone feels that it is time to render again "William Tell."

Co-ordination.

The co-operation of the orchestra and the organist is necessary for the theatre's success. It depends upon the manager to develop in both a mutual interest in the theatre's welfare. Proper co-ordination, so that changes from the orchestra to the organ will not be noticed by the audience, is suggested. When the orchestra finishes loudly with the understanding that the organist is not to appear until the orchestra has left the pit, the obvious impression given the audience is, "See what we can do. Now we are going. Now we are gone. Try to get along without us." The proper procedure would be to have the organist take up softly in the same pitch the number which the orchestra is finishing, and then gradually increase the volume so that the change passes unnoticed by the audience.

The Organ.

As far as the theatre manager is concerned, organ maintenance is most important. Organ equipment is expensive,

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and careless maintenance means serious waste. It seems only the part of common sense to suggest that the console should be covered when not in use, especially during the theatre's cleaning hours; that the organ chambers should be cleaned regularly: that the proper temperature, between 60 and 70 degrees, be maintained in the organ chambers, and that in the winter time thermostatic control should be used to maintain the proper temperature. Serious waste is incurred when such things are overlooked—which is quite often. Organ chambers should not be heated with steam radiators, but with electric heaters. The blower room should be kept clean. Rubbish should not be stored there. The intake should be covered with gauze to keep out dust. Cyphers should be remedied as soon as possible. Many other details of maintenance might be suggested, but a careful study of the organ will tell the alert manager what should be done.

The organist should not be permitted to improvise. He should have a library at his disposal. If monotonous repetition is to be avoided, this library should include a number of pieces which will make it possible to prevent repetition within a reasonable period. Sufficient time for relief should be given the organist so that his playing does not become mechanical. The organist should give the same attention to previews and cueing that the orchestra does. An organ score should be used as far as co-operating with the orchestra is concerned. Such matters as proper co-ordination, so that the changes always are made in the same pitch, depend upon tactful suggestions from the manager.

Possibilities.

Very few organs are used in a way which brings out all their possibilities. Comedy numbers, especially, give the organ many opportunities to use percussion devices and traps; yet how often do we find meaningless waltzes slovenly following the comedy. Comic effects can be interpreted with whistles, organ horns, sirens, sleigh bells, gongs, tom-toms, drums, tambourines, etc. When a skillful organist played the instrument which in a certain theatre had seemed so monotonous, the manager said, "What trick did you use? I didn't think my

organ had all that." The answer was, "You don't really appreciate an organ until you understand all that it can give when used by one who understands its fullest possibilities." You have paid for this equipment—get your money's worth.

Home-made sound devices for accompaniment can be cheaply built for use back-stage or in the pit.

Silence.

A "so-called" authority has written, "In a well-regulated theatre, there should never be a moment of silence: music of some kind should be played from the moment the theatre opens until it closes." Is this true? Silence is often the best interpretation of a particular screen sequence. One of the most impressive accompaniments ever given the news reel of a funeral is the well-timed silence of the orchestra. In music, as in any other art, effects depend upon contrasts. Sound, when used artistically, gets its effects by contrast. Just as the speaker, by a well-timed pause, can interpret what never could be interpreted by words, so the orchestra, by a well-timed silence, can interpret sometimes what could not be so effectively interpreted by music. However, perhaps the point made by the authority quoted is that there should not be long gaps of silence not used to interpret, but rather silence because the orchestra or the organist were not at their posts. Evidently, because music is so necessary for the interpretation of what is shown on the screen, a program without any music is just that much deficient in effectiveness.

Novelties.

Organ clubs, song slides, and numerous contests based on numbers played by the orchestra or the organist are so well known to the trade that they require no discussion.

Conclusion.

No detailed discussion of orchestra or organ music as an interpreter of the photoplay was attempted here. The subject was viewed from the viewpoint, not of art, but of the box office. The manager's relation to the problem, rather than that of the musical director, was emphasized. It cannot be questioned that music at the theatre is a potent factor in building theatre

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patronage. It cannot be questioned that the more the interest of musicians is developed in the theatre's welfare, the better for the theatre. If musicians are made to feel that they are only hirelings whose opinion is not respected, it cannot be expected that their interest in a theatre's welfare will be intense. When every theatre musician is so interested in the theatre that he not only plays as well as he can, but carries that interest in the theatre into his daily life, so that he "talks" the theatre, and does all that he can to attract patrons, the better for the theatre. This depends upon tactful, commonsense, diplomatic handling by the manager. There are many instances where the influence of building theatre patronage, as far as music is concerned, depends very much upon the manager.

CHAPTER XXXII

PROJECTION AND THE SCREEN

THERE was a time when audiences were not critical of projection. As long as the picture reached the screen they seemed satisfied. Defects were endured patiently because the very novelty of the entertainment held attention. They put up with flicker, travel ghosts, unsteady picture, poor focus, careless framing, defective masking, and even blank screens. The slide which followed a break in the film, "One moment, please," was endured without a murmur.

To-day audiences know good projection. They may not use technical terms in discussing it, but they do discuss it. They may not walk out on poor projection, but they avoid the theatre where it is permitted. Sometimes they make their displeasure apparent right in the theatre. At a critical moment in the showing of a feature picture at a Broadway theatre recently the film broke. There were hisses and cat-calls and angry murmurs that made resentment very evident.

Influence.

Good projection is a factor which influences patronage. In discussing competitive theatres patrons often remark, "The pictures are always so clear and smoothly run at the . . . Theatre, but at the . . . Theatre something seems wrong." Good projection in many cases is the deciding element which determines patronage at a theatre. The quality of projection varies considerably at different theatres. Excellence is not limited to the larger theatres. There are small neighborhood houses where projection is practically perfect, and on the other hand there are big city first-run houses where projection is ridiculously defective considering the splendid equipment which is available.

Responsibility.

The theatre manager may not be responsible for the theatre site, for the quality of productions booked, for the equipment

and decoration of the house, or even for the extent of advertising which is limited by an exacting advertising budget. But projection is something for which he is responsible. He cannot be efficient if he cannot supervise projection. There are instances where managers spend time complaining about the quality of photoplays available, when projection at their theatres is so defective that discriminating patrons would avoid the theatre no matter what was on the program. Good projection is demanded to-day from everyone—from executives at the studio who know that poor projection can ruin a good photoplay, right down to the patrons at the theatre.

Importance.

Why is projection important? The very nature of motionpicture entertainment makes it so. During such entertainment patrons like to feel that they are part of the story, living the action-moving, fighting, fearing, thrilling, moving on and conquering with the characters on the screen. Thus they live what might be called an "illusion." They are carried away to the scene of the action, or, better still, find themselves right in the action. This illusion makes entertainment satisfactory. It cannot be satisfactory if something happens to spoil the illusion-something that reminds the patron that he or she is sitting in a theatre chair looking at a two-dimensional surface covered with light and shadow. Defective projection prevents the patron from slipping right into the story, and living through it with the characters. Defective projection can jerk the patron right out of the action of the story and spoil the illusion that is being lived through. Defective projection can make satisfactory entertainment impossible.

How necessary for entertainment is this illusion which depends so much upon projection is evident by comparisons. When you read a novel, your entertainment is satisfactory if you forget that you are reading print on pages. The skill of the novelist takes you right into the action, and against the background of the story you live through the action with the characters. An illusion is created. If, while you are reading, someone slams a door or disturbs you in some other way, the illusion is spoiled and you are jerked back to realize that you

are just sitting in a chair with a book in your hand. The entertainment is spoiled. The same thing happens if the print is poor, if the lighting is defective, if the chair is uncomfortable. In a legitimate theatre, also, satisfactory entertainment depends upon illusion. But shaky scenery, glaring lights, back-stage noises, inarticulate pronunciation of the actors—all make illusion impossible and you realize that it is not real action in which you are playing a part, but simply theatre make-believe.

At the motion-picture theatre, entertainment depends upon an illusion which is created by many, many details. But projection is one of the most important. Any one of a hundred small or seemingly small defects in the projector or the screen, or small mistakes by the projectionist, can spoil all that was done by the scenario writer, the director, the cast, and the long line of highly paid artists and experts whose genius was spent in the preparation of the film. A noisy machine, dust or oil on the lens, warped film, a bent sprocket, vibrations of the projector, careless change-overs, improper speed, a dirty screen, a carelessly fitted screen—these are but a few of the causes that can spoil what patrons pay to get and what high-salaried talent labored to produce—satisfactory entertainment.

Supervision.

The quality of projection depends in some way upon the manager's supervision. He is responsible for every detail of operation, and this includes projection. This does not imply that the manager should be blundering and interfering with the projectionist. The manager who tries to interfere without knowing what it is all about, is just as much at fault as the ignorant, over-cautious manager who lets projection go on without any supervision because he is afraid to speak. The ideal condition exists when the theatre manager is familiar with the problems and can talk the language of the projectionist-and when the projectionist, taking real pride in his work, desirous of putting the best possible projection in the same at the least possible cost, is capable and conscientious and thoroughly interested in the welfare of the theatre. Then the manager and the projectionist can discuss common problems, each confident in the practical common sense and the

interest of the other. Poor projection has put theatres out of business and in many cases it was often someone else and not the projectionist who was responsible.

Projectionists.

Incapable projectionists are rapidly dropping out of the business and their places are being taken by men with the professional attitude. These men expect the manager to be appreciative of projection problems, to be familiar with equipment needs, to be co-operative, and to supervise projection intelligently. The capable projectionist is not a mechanical worker whose duties are limited to loading the projector, and later placing the film back into the can. He is constantly improving his knowledge, interested in principles of electricity, heat, optics, lenses, light-and-shadow effects, photography, and light mediums. He is familiar with the almost countless parts of the very delicate mechanism, and he is using inflammable material, which, when carelessly handled can do untold damage and cause needless expense. Knowing the naturalness of moving objects, he can give the proper speed for the scenes requiring speeding up, and scenes requiring slowing down. In other words, the efficient projectionist is to be respected. He is a real asset in any theatre. His interest in his work and his desire to improve often depends upon the attitude of the manager. Consequently, it is no exaggeration to say that projection in the theatre often depends upon the manager's tactful, sympathetic, encouraging and common-sense handling of the proiectionist.

Information.

The manager cannot supervise projection effectively unless he is familiar with important details. He is not born with the necessary knowledge. The showman may be "born and not made," but knowledge of the intricacies of projection is not part of the birthright. The manager should acquire knowledge of projection, and there are sources enough of information to make this possible—for instance, "The Handbook of Projection," by F. H. Richardson. If the manager is properly informed, many economies can be practiced and projection can

be properly supervised. The manager who can distinguish good projection from bad projection, watching it from different positions in the house, can help the projectionist whose opinion is based on what he sees only from the porthole of the projection room.

Light Source.

Good projection depends very much upon the light source. In photography, light and shadows show a gradation of values. If there is a light quality in the film, it should reach the screen as original developing and printing intended. Too much light will block out the gradations. Insufficient light will not bring out the gradations. Most prints to-day are tinted, and warm light adds a softer hue. Use the advice of experts in determining what light source is best suited for your theatre. With the wrong lens system, the wrong light source, and the wrong type of screen, satisfactory projection is not possible—or, at least, equally good results could be secured with proper equipment at less cost.

Timing.

Timing cannot be watched too carefully. There was a time when the camera speed in production was so varied that the individual projectionist had to readjust speeds many times during the projection of the finished film. To-day feature photoplays are photographed at a standard camera speed which averages 60. They are printed, developed, cut, and titled for running in the projector, at a projection speed of 85 feet per minute. Speeding up projection to hurry the show may spoil the entertainment. A projectionist in a hurry to finish his work. or the manager in an attempt to crowd in an extra show, may resort to over-speeding. This should be discouraged. The standard speed should not be ignored. No projectionist should attempt to change projection speed regularly through the feature photoplay to suit his interpretation of how the action should be shown. He cannot improve on what the experts at the studios have done.

At times the news reel, because of the conditions under which news cameramen work—angles, light, exposure, etc.—

requires a departure from the regular projection speed. This exception applies also to scenics and cartoons. The manager and the projectionist should adjust their timing together for each unit of the news reel, and for other subjects which require special timing. A projection time chart will prove helpful in arranging the timing of different program units according to the projection speed required.

Cutting.

The manager should not permit feature films to be rearranged or cut. The continuity of the feature is not improved upon by meddling with it at the theatre. Nor should scenes and titles be dropped from the feature to hurry the performance. It might be argued that certain scenes will not be missed. If they were not necessary for the story, they would not be in the film. It may be that the patron who saw the same feature at another theatre would notice that scenes were cut. This might lead to comment that would not be favorable to the theatre.

It is a bad practice to remove credit titles. Patrons are close followers of pictures and very often credit titles which may mean nothing to the manager may mean something to certain patrons. One manager who made it a practice of cutting credit titles was really startled by the number of inquiries that came to his office.

Handling Film.

Film should be returned from the theatre in that condition in which the theatre manager expects to receive it. Permitting sections of the film to be kept for private use in the theatre is not compatible with the ethics of honest business. Scratched film, torn sprockets, sprocket runs, careless splices, disfiguring punch marks, pasted change-over warnings—all these should not be permitted. As far as change-over marks are concerned, pasted change-over marks are a fire hazard. Even if they were not, these and other film disfigurements cause inconveniences at theatres where the film will be shown later. It is much better to list the change-over cues on a slate,

noting the last title and the following scene. This practice has the advantage of requiring closer attention from the projectionist.

Spliced places can be indicated without using pasted paper, which is also an inconvenience to others. Small notches on the edge of the film or white draftsman's ink will serve the purpose without the disadvantages to others of the pasted splice indicator. These are things which the supervision of the manager should cover.

Emergencies

The manager should realize that the projectionist who can keep things running in an emergency deserves credit. So, before he breaks into noisy fault-finding he should first inquire about the conditions. Supervision of projection does not mean constant complaining, nor does it mean vague general encouragement. The manager should be able to discuss the matter intelligently. He should be familiar with certain common defects. He should be able to recognize the defect and not confuse it with others-for instance, not call "flicker" "travel ghost," and not call "misframing" "unsteady picture," etc. He should know the possible causes of each defect and not make ridiculous statements when discussing the defect, such as, "The condition of the film causes distortion," or "The quality of film from the exchange is responsible for travel ghosts," etc. He should know, besides the cause, the remedy for the common projection defects.

Defects.

Here is a summary of the more common defects in projection as noticed by the manager who is watching the screen. With each defect are given the most common causes. The advantage of this summary is that the manager, noting the defect and asking for the cause, can know when the projectionist is giving a true report and when he is not. Of course, this summary is useful only in the hands of a manager who can distinguish one defect from another:

Projection Defects

1. Unsteady Picture.

Caused by:

(a) Excessive speed of projection.

(b) Bent intermittent sprocket.

(c) Insufficient tension on shoes.
(d) Wax or dirt on intermittent sprocket.

(e) Film perforations not standard.

(f) Film shrinkage.

(g) Improper splicing.

2. Poor Definition.

Caused by:

(a) Dirty objective lens.

(a) Dirty objective fells.
(b) Incorrect lens system.
(c) Reflected light from lens barrel.
(d) Warped film.
(e) Soft focus film or duplicate film.
(f) Vibration of projector.

- (g) Haze from wrong type of screen. (h) Uneven track on shoe and plate.
- 3. Travel Ghost.

Caused by:

(a) Revolving shutter does not synchronize with intermittent sprocket.

(b) Shutter blade too narrow.

- (c) Shutter at incorrect distance from lens.
- 4. Flicker.

Caused by:

(a) Projection speed too slow.

(b) Light source too strong.

(c) Unsteady arc.

- (d) Douser not properly timed for change-
- (e) Iris not properly timed.
- 5. Distortion.

Caused by:

(a) Steep projection angle.

(b) Side projector angle when projector is not perpendicular to screen.

(c) Wide-viewing angle from side seats.

6. Poor Illumination.

Caused by:

(a) Dirty condensers.

(b) Insufficient current.

(c) Incorrect optical system.

(d) Dense film.

(e) Scratched film.

- (f) Image of light source on screen.
- 7. Blank Screen.

Caused by:

(a) Wire trouble.

(b) Failure of current.

(c) Film breakage. Caused by:

- 1. Poor sprocket holes.
- 2. Torn or creased film.
- 3. Excessive tension.

4. Loose splices.

- 5. Poor cement, careless scraping, too weak a pressure.
- 8. Improper Projection Speed (unnatural movement of subject).

Caused by:

(a) Schedule requirements.(b) Inattention of projectionist.

(c) Defective projector slipping from set speed.

- (d) On change-over second projector allowed to "pick up" rather than running at speed of first projector.
- 9. Fuzzy Border.

Caused by:

(a) Dirt and lint in aperture plate.

10. Misframes.

Caused by:

(a) Faulty splicing.

(b) Projector not threaded "in frame."

11. Sprocket Holes Showing on Screen.

Caused by:

(a) Lateral guide rollers off center.

When defects are noticed, inquiry should be made into the cause of the defect and provision made so that it will not happen again. For this the appendix chart is serviceable. The manager who can only say, "Something is wrong with projection but I don't know what," will not have the respect of the capable projectionist, and will be at the mercy of the careless projectionist who may try to bluff with any excuse or explanation. The projectionist who knows that the manager can understand the explanation given for a defect will not

attempt to "put anything over." Many defects are caused by carelessness and excused by some high-sounding mechanical explanation which the manager who does not understand projection, will accept. Defects should be explained as due to negligence, to defective equipment, to defective film, or to unusual circumstances which could not be guarded against. If the defect is caused by film condition, the manager can take the matter up with the exchange. Besides, understanding the real cause, he will not waste the time of exchange executives by complaints which do not rightly refer to film condition.

Economies.

Many economies can be practiced in the projection room. Current may be wasted in many ways. For instance, when carbons are warmed up too far in advance of use. Carbon breakage may be heavy because no carbon chart record is kept. Carbons may not be burned to the length that is possible. The use of such a chart is a protection against dishonesty and also a reminder of economy.

Careless maintenance of equipment is the cause of many wasted dollars. Accordingly, the manager should have some check on the schedule of cleaning, oiling, polishing and adjusting followed by the projectionist. His supervision should require careful observance of this schedule. Parts should be ordered long enough in advance to prevent emergencies and to save the expense entailed by telegrams.

Fire Hazards.

Fire ordinances for the projection room should be rigidly complied with, not only for safety's sake but also because this will have a bearing on the insurance rate. Oil rags should not litter the floor. There should be a covered container for carbon butts; film not in use should be in covered containers. Sand pails and extinguishers should be accessible. Fusible links should be in working order and smoking should not be permitted under any condition in the projection room. The cleanliness of the projection room, and the observance of fire department regulations there is just as much a matter of manager supervision as it is elsewhere in the theatre.

The Screen.

The selection of the proper screen is most important. No screen can add anything to the amount of light received from the projector; but the nature of the light reflected often makes a difference between good projection and bad projection. Therefore, it is false economy not to purchase that screen which is best suited to the requirements of your theatre, inasmuch as the average life of the screen is so long and screen cost so relatively small.

The selection of the screen should not be determined by guess work or careless calculation. There are sources of information available for reference in this matter—for instance, the data prepared by the Research Laboratories of the Eastman Kodak Company for cloth, paint, and kalsomine screen surfaces.

Masking.

The screen should be securely hung and properly masked. Masking corrects the keystone effect and gives a clean-cut edge to the picture, cutting off the fuzzy edges due to dust on the aperture plate of the projector. But, more than this, skillful masking adds depth to the picture. This is why black masking is not as effective as neutral gray or dark blue. Black masking presents too severe a contrast to the screen picture and the eye cannot accustom itself to this severe contrast. The impression of depth is created without the disadvantage of the severe contrast by using the gray or the dark blue masking. It is evident that the masking material should be non-reflective, such as velour or flannel.

In theatres where the projection angle is so steep that distortion is serious, it is well to mask off near the screen any perpendicular lines such as pillars, stage props, etc., because these lines in close proximity to the screen call attention to the distortion. A ground cloth of dark, unreflected material on the stage floor will correct the haze effect caused by reflection from that highly polished surface. Light colors or highly reflecting surfaces near the screen should be masked.

Glare.

Glare spots on the screen caused by reflected light are in-

excusable. Such glare spots may be caused by light reflected from orchestra stands, the highly polished surface of the piano or the organ, from the back-stage lights, and from aisle and exit house lights. In small theatres, even stray light from the projection room can cause glare spots on the screen. In such cases the portholes should be more carefully masked with light tin.

Maintenance.

The maintenance of the screen is most important. In a month the dust that settles on the unprotected screen will cut down reflection from 10 to 15 per cent. Therefore, during the cleaning hours especially, a protective curtain should be hung directly in front of the screen. In fact, when the screen is not in use it should be protected by a curtain. But no matter how carefully the screen is protected, it requires regular dusting and brushing. The type of screen will determine how this should be done, and if there is any doubt, the manufacturer will send instructions on the matter. Besides the regular dusting, some screens require washing. If the manager doubts how important screen maintenance is, let him clean one-half of the screen that has been neglected for a few months, then see the difference in projection between the clean and the unclean half.

It is advisable that the audience never see a blank screen. Traveler curtains can be used to catch the title and then be parted at the end of the credit titles—and they can be used at the close of the program. It was explained that illusion was necessary for entertainment. The blank screen at any time makes it so much harder to create that illusion.

Conclusion.

As far as the manager is concerned, good projection depends upon three things: technical knowledge, good business sense, and a personality that will develop the proper relationship with the projectionist. All three are essential. Intelligent supervision will be difficult unless there exists a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding between the manager and the projectionist.

CHAPTER XXXIII

VENTILATION

If all the important factors which influence theatre attendance are to be considered, ventilation cannot be overlooked. There was a time when warm weather seriously interfered with theatre attendance everywhere. To-day, in some great modern theatres where air conditioning equipment is installed, warm weather really helps to build theatre patronage. Such theatres are actually "summer resorts" where relief is sought from the heat.

On the hottest, most uncomfortable days such theatres provide an air condition which in purity, air movement, temperature and humidity equals what is found at pine-clad mountain-top resorts. This is not poetry; it is fact. People appreciate the fact. Equipment has made theatre attendance during the summer months equal to that of winter months, in some cases people actually coming into the theatre to get "cooled off."

But relatively few theatres are so equipped. The others have a real problem. If ideal conditions are not possible because equipment is inadequate, at least some approximation to the ideal condition is possible. It is ridiculous to think that the problem is solved by hanging a sign in the lobby reading "20 degrees cooler inside." Such signs dripping with painted icicles do not convince the suffering public. By avoiding such theatres they make it evident that the manager is misstating the fact, and as usual misstatement reacts unfavorably in the long run.

In these days of severe competition, when distinctive institutional factors determine theatre attendance, proper ventilation can be used by the alert manager to attract patronage which otherwise might be lost. Even with meagre equipment much can be done to improve conditions. Besides, a skillful use of color can create the impression that conditions are better than they actually are. Then, attractive advertising by spot-

lighting the air conditions of a particular theatre will draw patronage from a competitor who neglects this important factor.

Damages.

Patron comfort is the main objective in regulating ventilation; but, irrespective of patrons, the matter is important. Defective ventilation shortens the life of theatre decorations and theatre furniture. The damage caused to drapes by dirty air is evident. Besides, if proper humidity is not maintained, overheated air causes furniture to crack, because the dry air draws out its moisture. Paintings also can be ruined if dried out by air with a low percentage of moisture which strips the paint from the canvas. Cracked ceilings, soiled drapes, warped chairs, damaged organ consoles are but a few of the many expensive effects due to improper ventilation.

Patron Comfort.

But patron comfort is the chief consideration. Certain air conditions make satisfactory entertainment impossible. Headaches, irritableness, nausea, dizziness, "that tired feeling" can be caused by two hours spent in a badly ventilated theatre. People within an enclosure absorb oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Unless new oxygen is supplied, that invigorated feeling and that relaxation which entertainment should give are impossible. Besides the evident discomfort, there is serious likelihood of illness; a low percentage of moisture in the air makes one susceptible to diseases of the nose and throat because the natural moisture of the tender membranes is dried out. Drafts, too, can cause colds.

Four Factors.

Proper ventilation involves four factors: clean air, circulation, the proper temperature, and proper humidity.

The factor of cleanliness involves the elimination of odors, dust and dirt. Circulation involves the avoidance of draft, the expulsion of dead air, and a uniform supply of pure air at the rate of about 25 cubic feet of air per minute per person within the enclosure.

Humidity.

The quality of the air is most important. This is not a matter merely of degree of warmth or cold. It includes also the proper degree of humidity. Humidity is moisture carried by the air. The amount of moisture the air can carry depends on the temperature. Warm air will carry more moisture than cold air. Warm, dry air takes moisture very rapidly from the surface of the human body. If a room at 40 degrees is heated to 75 degrees without the addition of more moisture, the humidity decreases as the temperature increases. Humidity has a direct bearing on comfort, both in summer and in winter. For example, with the temperature at about 70 degrees we feel very warm. Yet in the winter within our homes, with the temperature at 70 degrees, we may feel chilly. The difference in feeling is due to humidity. In the summer months with a heavy percentage of humidity in the air, perspiration or body moisture does not evaporate quickly, and because our bodies cannot throw off their heat quickly because of the blanket of moisture, we feet the heat and the oppressive weakening mugginess. In any heated enclosure during winter the dry air takes moisture off quickly and causes the chilly feeling because there is no blanket of moisture to keep in the heat.

The motion picture theatre, regardless of extremes in weather outside the theatre, has a serious problem in the very fact that many people within an enclosure radiate heat and moisture. Besides, the theatre lights also radiate heat. Moreover, the sudden change in the number of people present causes rapid change in temperature and humidity. It is a simple matter to keep the theatre properly heated. But patron comfort does not depend alone on degree of heat. Looking at a thermometer to determine patron comfort is ridiculous. It is like measuring the square feet of an area by considering only the width or only the height. Comfort depends on a proper percentage of moisture at a given temperature. Both temperature and humidity must be considered.

The humidity condition of an enclosure is calculated by reading a hygrometer. This is a double thermometer with one bulb exposed to the air to register the temperature; the other thermometer has its bulb covered with a wick immersed in water. This water is absorbed by the air. The evaporation causes loss of heat. Therefore the wet bulb thermometer will always register lower than the dry bulb. The difference in reading will depend on the rate of evaporation which is caused by the humidity condition of the surrounding air. The evaporation if the air is drier is faster than it would be if moisture in the air were heavy.

Relative Humidity.

The wet bulb reading, as such, does not indicate humidity. The difference in reading between the dry and wet bulb must be referred to in the Relative Humidity Table, which indicates what the humidity is at a definite temperature according to the difference in reading between the wet and the dry bulb thermometer. (Note Relative Humidity Table in appendix.)

These readings must be accurate. A difference of only 2 degrees in the wet bulb reading would make an error of 8 degrees in calcuating relative humidity at some temperatures.

Ideal Conditions.

Patron comfort depends, therefore, on the relation between the temperature and humidity. Research has proved that maximum comfort is possible during the summer months with a dry bulb temperature of between 73 and 76, and a relative humidity of between 40 and 45; and in the winter months with a dry bulb temperature between 70 and 73, with a relative humidity between 40 and 55.

A hygrometer can be purchased at small cost from any weather instrument company. One will suffice for theatre use because the air condition of the auditorium is practically uniform for temperature and humidity.

It is one thing to know what the ideal is, and how it can be calculated; it is another thing to maintain ideal air conditions within the theatre. There are few theatres equipped with self-regulated systems maintaining ideal conditions. The managers at other theatres can do nothing better than secure from the manufacturer of the equipment installed, instructions on how it can be used to best advantage. During the winter months proper humidity conditions are the main problem. If air cannot be passed through water spray, wet towels in the hot-air ducts, or even behind radiators, will add some moisture.

During the summer months, if air cannot be artificially cooled, the least that can be done is to circulate more air, because air in motion seems cooler than it actually is. Proper maintenance of fans, vents, mushrooms, filters, coils, and air chambers will help to get better results.

Never close the theatre after the last performance until fresh air is brought in from every possible source. Closing the theatre immediately after the performance without this attempt at ventilation means that odors will remain in the theatre over-night, and it becomes just that much harder to air the theatre properly in the morning before patrons enter the theatre.

Colors.

Much can be done by the use of seasonal colors during the summer months to make the theatre seem cooler than it actually is. Green, blue-green and blue-violet in theatre lighting and theatre decoration are suggested. Light seat covers and light drapes, ferns and greens, buzzer fans with streamers, lattice exit doors, cool uniforms for the theatre staff, ice water or even lemonade served to the patrons, are a few of the things that help to summer comfort.

Advertising.

During the summer months, the theatre advertiser should not overlook the fact that patronage is attracted by convincing copy that the theatre offers an escape from the heat. A useful practice in this connection is a report of theatre temperature as compared with street temperature during certain hours of the day. It is evident that in the lobby attempts should be made to suggest the coolness within. Consequently, warm colors will be avoided. Neatness and cleanliness will be insisted upon. A new coat of white paint for the marquee will be a good investment. Awnings and buzzer fans will also help to attract.

Conclusion.

It cannot be doubted that motion picture entertainment is as much a necessity in the summer months as at any other time. This has been proved by attendance at theatres where proper air condition exists. But like any other influence which determines theatre attendance, this must be advertised. If proper ventilation were found at every theatre, it would not be so strong a selling point. Because it is not, the alert manager has in it a very potent factor for building theatre patronage.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THEATRE ACCIDENTS

NCE a patron enters the theatre, the manager is responsible for his welfare and safe-keeping. The manager has the same moral responsibility in caring for the public in his care, as has the engineer in charge of train passengers, the captain in charge of vessel passengers, or the proprietor in charge of hotel guests. This moral responsibility is not merely idealistic. The manager can be held criminally liable for neglect.

Even when the theatre is owned by a corporation, the manager cannot escape responsibility and let the corporation or owner of the theatre take the consequences of his neglect. Besides this moral responsibility there is a business aspect of the matter. Careless management, which results in preventable accidents to patrons, injures the reputation of a theatre and this in turn affects the box office.

Responsibility.

The theatre manager is entrusted with the safe-keeping of thousands of individuals throughout the year. He should consider the safety of each patron as though each patron were a member of his immediate family. Women and children and the infirm who enter theatres, place themselves entirely in the hands of the manager as completely and as confidently as children entrust their safe-keeping to parents. The responsibility is heavy indeed, and the manager each day should give thought to the serious consequences that might result by even trivial neglect on his part.

Records.

Theatre accidents are comparatively few, considering the great number of theatre patrons handled each year. But this is a tribute to carefulness. It is not a condition that exists despite neglect. The point to be made is that the carefulness

must be constant, and vigilance must be unrelenting. The theatre's record is a good one and it remains for every manager to keep it so.

Consider the matter of fires. The average of fires for different types of buildings is as follows: Schools, 5; churches, 5; city dwellings, 618; warehouses, 4; farms, 96; public garages, 81; dry goods stores, 3; printing plants, 3; and theatres, 2. That is a record of which all associated with theatre management can be very proud.

Theatre accidents are also relatively few in number. As far as frequency is concerned, theatre accidents can be ranked in the following order: Patrons falling, injuries from falling obstacles, fire, door accidents, crowd panic accidents, stage accidents, bruises and cuts from contact with sharp edges, nails, bolts, loose wire hat holders, loose metal chair tags, etc.

Injuries from falls are often the fault of the patron rather than of the management. These falls occur on stairways, in aisles, in the lobby, in the rest-rooms, and on the sidewalk in front of the theatre. Where the fall is due to negligence on the part of the management, the cause has been insufficient light, slippery steps, obstructions, loose carpets, loose-hand-rails, defective seats, torn carpets, broken stairs, loose treads, hanging tapes, badly placed mushrooms, floor holes.

Theatre falls can be prevented by a more careful supervision of house-keeping regulations and equipment maintenance.

Lighting.

Theatre lighting presents a difficult problem. Satisfactory projection is not possible if interior lighting is too bright. On the other hand, a theatre too dimly lighted is the cause of many tripping and falling accidents. People coming from the brightness of the street into too dimly lighted a theatre, especially if they are not familiar with the house, are really in danger. Safety lighting should be placed at critical positions. The expense involved is justified by the results. Flash-lights efficiently handled by the capable ushers will prevent many accidents. The theatre staff is so familiar with the surroundings

that they often do not realize that the patron, to whom the surroundings are strange, is at a serious disadvantage.

Danger Spots.

Detailed instruction for housekeeping and equipment maintenance so that accidents will be prevented is not needed here. Common-sense is a sufficient guide. The point to be made is that the manager should realize that in many theatres there are "danger spots." He should go over his house regularly so that supervision will detect the danger in time.

Loose carpets, torn carpets, slippery tiling, loose mats, damaged seats, foreign material stored or left where it can cause patrons to stumble, loosely hung fire extinguishers or fire hose, obstructing lobby boards, unprotected radiators and pipes, loose hand-rails, and every one of the other possible causes of accidents to patrons, cannot escape detection by careful and constant supervision.

Insurance.

Neglect in supervision cannot be justified by the statement, "Insurance covers the loss." Theatre insurance is an expense, the amount of which is very much in the control of the manager.

Most theatres carry the following types of insurance: Fire, public liability, safe burglary, boiler and plate glass.

But in every case the amount of the premium charged is determined on the experience basis. In other words, the past record of the theatre, and the quality of its maintenance determine how the theatre must pay for protection against loss.

The insurance charges of some theatres are as high as the receipts of almost an entire month. Insurance charges of other theatres are as low as the average receipts of a single day. The difference is often determined by the individual manager's supervision and efficient maintenance.

Business Viewpoint.

So the manager must face the matter not only from the viewpoint of the moral responsibility involved, but also from the viewpoint of strict business. He pays for neglect by an

increased insurance charge. He pays for neglect by loss in patronage due to the realization that a visit to his theatre is a real risk. Patrons injured because of neglect on the part of the management, are not satisfied by a payment which covers the injury or the damage. They talk about the accident. Word-of-mouth comment spreads an opinion of the theatre which hurts attendance.

Remember always that perfection of maintenance is a business builder—and this is not limited to the interior of the theatre. The sidewalk should be considered. The manager who permits the sidewalk to be ice-coated or snow-covered during the winter months not only overlooks an injury hazard, but encourages an opinion of the theatre which is not favorable. Snowdrifts in front of the curb should be removed. Throughout the year sidewalk repairs should not be neglected. Sidewalk traffic is heavy in front of the theatre, and the very condition of the sidewalk helps to form an opinion concerning the quality of theatre operation.

Lobby displays, marquee signs and material that might be blown down by the wind and cause injury should be securely fastened. In this connection something might be said concerning relamping and cleaning the marquee. The sidewalk should not be cluttered up with ladders, barrels and boxes and equipment for marquee maintenance when sidewalk traffic is heavy. Even if the theatre is closed at the time, the public can be seriously inconvenienced. When pedestrians are forced out on the street, or when their progress is impeded by sidewalk obstacles in front of the theatre, their resentment reacts unfavorably for the theatre. A manager might argue that at this time he is not losing patronage, because the theatre is not open and tickets cannot be purchased. However, those who are inconvenienced by the carelessness of the management form an unfavorable opinion which influences patronage. Besides, there is the accident hazard from marquee repairs at a time when sidewalk traffic is heavy.

First Aid in the Theatre.

"What would be done by you or your staff in case of an accident to a patron or to an employee?"

Every manager should have an answer to this question. Accidents happen often enough in the lobby, on the stairways, in the aisles, and on the street in front of the theatre, to make this matter important. For instance, falls, fainting, dizziness, etc. For every such emergency, definite procedure should be prepared. The staff should be instructed to carry out that procedure. The manager can set down a list of possible accidents that might occur, and beside each, the method to be followed in handling that emergency. It should be decided where the injured one should be taken—whether to the first-aid room or to a room designated for that purpose, such as the manager's office. If no provision is made for such an emergency, confusion is certain.

For instance, a patron faints. There is general disorder. None of the staff seems to know what should be done, and many of the audience are inconvenienced. Therefore, the staff should be trained in the proper method of carrying injured patrons, such as the four-handed grip, the shoulder support, and the three-man support for the totally disabled. The injured patron should be taken from the sight of the audience as quickly as possible. Where the emergency justifies it, the doctor should be called immediately; in fact, he should be called unless there is clearly no need for him. Arrangements can be made in advance so that local doctors will be at the call of the theatre at certain hours. The manager should know at what hours the doctors can be reached. Many seemingly unimportant cases are apt to be serious. Even if nothing serious develops as a result of the doctor's delay, negligence and ignorance on the part of the theatre management create a bad impression.

Some accidents require expert first-aid treatment. Consequently, a first-aid cabinet should be at every theatre. First-aid booklets can be secured with the first-aid cabinet. It often happens that first aid given by a layman familiar with the common-sense principles governing an emergency has saved a life. The permanent gratitude of patrons is won by efficient handling of emergencies like this. It is one of those things, that is not only appreciated by the individual involved, but by all who hear of the theatre's efficiency.

Theatre Fire and Panic.

Theatre fires are comparatively few. The property damage from such fires is small. But the accidents caused by the panic which can follow the fear caused by even the threat of fire should be considered. Every manager should be prepared in advance for an emergency which might happen—an actual fire or the shout of "Fire" when there is no fire.

The staff should be thoroughly trained so that each member will occupy a definite post in the emergency, and be able to do his part in handling the emergency. The ushers should be trained to open all the exit doors and direct the patrons toward the different exists so that the entire audience will not mill toward the main entrance. Panic pockets where the hurrying audience may become jammed should be considered, and a member of the staff should be properly trained to handle such critical places. Fire drills of the entire staff should be held regularly. Every member of the staff should know his post for a fire emergency. Instructions should be given for handling every possible contingency that might arise. Principles for handling an excited crowd should be explained. Set announcements should be memorized and properly given.

Fire apparatus should be maintained so that it is more than an ornament. Exit doors should open easily, and fire-escapes and areaways be unobstructed. A staff signal for the fire emergency should be determined upon, and understood by the entire staff. Flashing the exit lights is one such signal. It is evident that the position of the emergency switch controlling lights should be known by others besides the manager, so that the signal to the staff can be given promptly. When a fire is noticed, the performance should be kept going just as though nothing had happened. The exit facilities that exist make it possible for the audience to leave the theatre safely, provided that panic is not started.

Announcement.

Much depends upon the manager's announcement to the audience in this emergency. This announcement should be

made in such a way that no hint is given of the fire. For instance, the manager can announce that city authorities have requested that the audience leave the theatre as quietly and as quickly as possible to test the exit facilities of the theatre, and that they will be re-admitted after the test. Or, the announcement can be made that because of an emergency in the neighborhood, city authorities have requested that the audience leave the theatre immediately. The word "fire" should never be used.

If members of the staff are at the exit doors when the manager is making this announcement, and if plently of exit space is noticed by the audience, and if the staff directs different sections of the audience to the different exits, there should be no injury.

Of course, the position of the fire-alarm box should be known by different members of the staff, and the method of operating this box clearly understood by all. If there is a fire-alarm box on the stage, it should not be covered by stage props. It should be easily accessible at all times.

Using the telephone rather than the fire-alarm box is not advisable. If the fire-alarm box is not on the stage, but in the neighborhood of the theatre, its exact location should be known, because every minute of delay is serious in a real emergency.

Inspection.

After the audience has left the theatre it is important that the manager and the staff search the basements, dressing rooms, rest rooms and other rooms where members of the audience and members of the staff might be unaware of the emergency. The periodic inspections of the theatre by members of the fire department will give the manager the opportunity of pointing out the layout of the theatre, so that in an emergency the work of the firemen will not be hampered.

Every manager should realize that in a fire the members of the fire department take control of the situation and any interference by him can cause his arrest. However, he should have previously pointed out to firemen on inspection tours those places where water damage would be serious.

Precaution.

The manager in a fire-proof theatre cannot afford to disregard the emergency of fire. All the precaution taken against an actual fire should also be taken against the panic possibility existing in any crowded theatre.

For instance, in a crowded theatre someone might cry "Fire," either through mischievousness or under the false impression that a flash from the booth or the smell of smoke meant real danger. When this has happened, even though the staff was thoroughly trained, and the manager took every precaution to make the proper announcement, injuries from panic-jamming have resulted. Imagine what would happen in a crowded theatre at the cry of "fire" if no previous training were given the staff, and if the manager had made no provision for handling such emergency.

Porthole covering of the projection room should be inspected regularly so that they can be closed instantly in case there is smoke in the projection room, or in case a piece of film catches fire. With the safety devices found in projection rooms it is not likely that any fire would spread and cause a serious danger. But it takes no more than smoke through the porthole or flame or glare to excite some nervous patron in the balcony into crying "Fire." It is not enough to have the porthole covers controlled by fusible links, so that they will close automatically in case of a serious fire in the projection booth, but there should be a knife handy to cut the ropes immediately, or a handle to close the doors immediately as well, in case of a small fire which is not enough to melt the fusible link.

Hazards.

Fire hazards which are common at theatres are indicated so that the manager will be reminded of possible danger points:

- 1. Panel boxes left open so that a spark might ignite inflammable material near by.
- 2. Benzine and gasoline used for cleaning where the fumes can reach exposed flame.
- 3. Smoking on the stage and in dressing rooms.

- 4. Lighting equipment that is hot from use stored near inflammable material before it is cool.
- 5. The use of open flame, pistol explosions, etc.
- 6. Carelessness in handling exposed film.
- 7. Combustible materials allowed to collect.
- 8. Permitting cigarette and refuse containers to become cluttered with rubbish.
- 9. Defective insulation.
- 10. Spotlights too close to drapes.
- 11. Lumber accumulated where a spark can ignite it.
- 12. Rags and papers in panel boxes.
- 13. Make-shift fuses.

Check-Up.

In inspecting a house the following should be considered:

- Fire-alarm box—not obstructed—with instructions for its use.
- 2. Exits—properly lighted—panic bolts oiled to release easily—lattice doors front of exits opening easily.
- 3. Fire escapes—hand-rails tight—not obstructed—out-side lights burning at night—snow and ice removed.
- 4. Areaways—clear of snow and ice—not cluttered with rubbish—not obstructed—properly lighted.
- Stage skylight—ropes in good condition—rope knife at hand.
- Water pails for fire emergency filled and not hidden away.
- 7. Hose couplings connected and water control not jammed.
- 8. Fire extinguishers properly filled—chemicals not clogging nozzle.
- 9. Sprinkler system heads not obstructed.
- 10. Combustible materials properly stored.

Policies.

The manager should be familiar with the policy covering the different forms of insurance. He should know what conditions must be fulfilled if a loss is to be covered. Violation of these conditions means that in case of loss the insurance company is not responsible.

Rating schedules should be considered for the possibility of improvements which would result in reducing insurance charges. In the case of every policy the manager is supposed to carry out the conditions of the contract as outlined in the policy. To do this he must familiarize himself with those conditions.

Conclusion.

Accidents at the theatre are in the majority of cases preventable. Every accident, apart from the damage cost incurred, affects patronage because the community's opinion of the theatre is influenced. It is not a wise business policy to wait until an accident occurs and then remove the cause. It is better business to be constantly on the alert, so that causes of accidents are removed before the accident occurs. This is a matter that requires constant supervision, and the more thorough the supervision is, and the better trained the staff is to assist in possible emergencies, the better will be the record of the individual theatre as far as accidents of every kind are concerned.

CHAPTER XXXV

LEGAL PROBLEMS

It is not expected that the theatre manager know all intricate points of legal problems that might apply in theatre operation. The law that applies to theatres applies in some measure to everything else, and it is practically impossible even for a lawyer to be familiar with every phase of every possible legal problem in every section of the country. There are federal laws, state laws, municipal ordinances and regulations which, in their total for the entire country, would make a heavy volume.

Local Ordinances.

The manager, however, should be familiar with local ordinances that affect his theatre operation. He should acquaint himself with fundamental principles that apply to those common problems which he must face in emergencies that happen regularly. Ignorance of local ordinances will cause serious inconvenience.

Repeated violations of local ordinances by a theatre create a very bad impression. Therefore, the manager should be aware of what phases of his operation are affected by local ordinances.

The local ordinances that require particular attention are those governing the employment of minors, the admission of minors, building-code regulations concerning aisle widths, stairway railings, safety lighting, seating, standing room, lobby space, hanging signs, areaway obstructions, etc. Fire ordinances vary for different communities. The manager can readily secure a list of the regulations applicable to his theatre, and then conduct his operation accordingly.

It is not a wise policy to "try to get away with it." Repeated violation of a regulation which has not resulted in any official notification puts the theatre at the mercy of an official who can cause serious trouble. Do not wait until the

emergency occurs. Make sure of the violations that apply, and then direct your operation accordingly.

The Employment of Minors.

There are local regulations governing the employment of ushers, and children for stage work. Different states have different laws. Local conditions determine what is expedient. But all the time used in employing and training will be in vain if at the last minute some official calls attention to the violation of regulations concerning the employment of minors. These regulations affect the age of minors employed, the number of working hours, the time of day or night when their labor is permitted, the local authority whose permission is to be secured for such employment, and the provision for education during the period of employment.

Liability.

The management can be held liable for certain accidents that happen on the theatre premises. Failure to understand fundamental principles governing this matter has resulted in managers making settlements which would not be otherwise required. Stubborn refusal to make a minor settlement or give personal satisfaction, usually results in serious inconvenience later on.

Generally, liability for accidents on the theatre premises applies only when the action is due to culpable negligence. For instance, if a patron's hand is injured by the loose wire of the seat hat-holder or by protruding nails in the seat, by screws or splinters in the seat or by torn carpets, or depression in the floor, the question of liability depends upon whether or not the injury is due to negligence on the part of the management. The law requires a reasonable care for the physical safety of theatre patrons. If the manager has had reasonable time to learn of the possible danger and to make repairs, and has neglected to do so, the possibility of his liability is great. However, if the injury occurred before there was sufficient time to make the repair, especially if detailed inspection of equipment is practiced at the theatre, the possibility of liability is not so great. This is one reason why it has been suggested that equip-

ment be inspected regularly. If the theatre manager can show that his seats are inspected daily for loose wires, protruding nails and screws and splinters, the evidence of such inspection will count very much in his favor.

The management is liable if patrons are injured by theatre employees who cause the injury while acting within the scope of their assigned duties. For instance, if a patron is struck by an usher because he refused to follow the usher's instruction, it would be held that the usher, acting in the capacity of his official duty, had caused the injury, and the management is liable. However, if the employee who causes injury does so when not in the performance of his regular duties, the liability for the management does not exist. For instance, if a member of the orchestra struck a patron during a personal disagreement in the lobby of the theatre, the management would not be liable, because in this case the musician was not acting within the scope of his official duties. Injury sustained solely through the patron's own carelessness, does not impose a liability on the management. If, while a marquee sign was being hung, it slipped and injured a passerby, the management would generally be liable.

Caution.

A useful caution in this connection is to keep a complete record of every detail of an accident that occurs about the theatre. The theatre manager in preparing this report should be aware of those facts which determine the liability. These reports should be carefully filed. Every theatre accident may be the basis for a lawsuit. The serious consequences of the accident may not be evident at the time. It counts very much in the theatre manager's favor, if he can show a detailed report of the accident, and also the signed statement of witnesses. Managers have often been saved from serious legal action started by dishonest attempts at accident "frame-ups" because they had available detailed reports of the accident properly witnessed.

Legal action is often averted by the manager's tactful handling of the situation. The stubborn, argumentative manager might so irritate an injured patron that the patron would take legal action simply because of the grievance felt, even if the possibility of getting damages were slight. The manager who insists "the law is on my side," and does not show a personal interest in the injured patron, or try by sympathy and patience to make the patron feel his interest, not only sends away a disgruntled patron but makes possible circulation of comment which would not be favorable to the theatre. Every legal action brought against the theatre creates unpleasant publicity. Word-of-mouth comment is a powerful factor that should be considered in this connection, and every reasonable effort should be made to avoid legal action.

The Loss of Patrons' Property.

In cases where the management is charged with liability for the loss of articles belonging to patrons attending the theatre, the main point at issue is whether or not the management is responsible for the loss.

In general, the management is not considered an insurer against the loss of patrons' property. However, reasonable care to protect such property is legally expected. It is generally agreed that the display of notices reading, "The management is not responsible for the loss of property belonging to patrons," does not excuse carelessness in reasonably safeguarding the patrons' property. It is not good policy to display such notices within the theatre, or to print such notices on the theatre ticket or on the theatre program. They are of no advantage and cause an unfavorable impression.

Theatres that have a check room where patrons' property can be left, are not liable for the loss of property from this check room unless the loss is due to the negligence of employees. Articles damaged in the check room do not necessarily impose a liability on the management. The matter of negligence is the point at issue. Circumstances determine for each case the amount of safeguarding and care reasonably expected from the management. This is a matter of litigation. If a patron explains that a deposited article is of extreme value and requires that it be particularly safeguarded, and despite this request the management is negligent, the possibility of liability is very strong. Consequently, a check-room employee

should be instructed carefully in the handling of such a matter.

At some check rooms the theatre employees ask about the contents of packages so that proper care can be exercised. If an article in the check room is damaged by a careless employee acting in the scope of his regular duties, the management is liable, because it is expected that the management employ capable help. When check-room service is offered patrons, the check room should be properly protected and articles properly identified before they are returned. Dishonest visitors to a theatre where check-room service is careless can act in collusion and cause the management serious loss.

There are theatres where one usher alone is expected to handle a steady stream of patrons without any well-organized plan for the storing and identification of packages. This careless system really encourages dishonesty. Usually, proper provision is not made until the management is faced with a lawsuit.

Why not go over the matter carefully and arrange your check room so that possibilities for liability are practically eliminated?

The Theatre Ticket.

The recognized legal status of the purchaser of a theatre ticket differs in the various states. In some states a ticket is held to be a "lease" and in others a "license." The difference is that a lease may not be broken, whereas a license may be revoked on return of the license fee. However, if a ticket is held to be a lease under the laws of your state, it is generally possible to change the status of your ticket by printing on the document a contract to the effect that the ticket is revocable. This should be carefully drawn by a first-class lawyer, preferably one specializing in theatrical matters. Even where a ticket is held to be a license, it is well to use this contract. Then there can be no legal comeback, if it is necessary to refuse admission to a person or to eject him during the performance for any proper cause.

A ticket holder can demand the return of money paid for a ticket if there is any important change in the program contrary to what was advertised. This is especially true if the advertising was intended to deceive. To what extent a change in program entitles the purchaser of a ticket to a refund depends on particular conditions, and involves the time when the request is made.

In cases where there is a mistake in ticket sales so that a patron does not get the seat for which he actually holds a stub, the management is only liable for the refund of the price of the ticket. There have been cases where patrons brought suit against the theatre for not having available the seat for which a purchase-ticket stub was held. They demanded damages based on the inconvenience that was caused, the expense of travel to the theatre, and other details. But the theatre was held liable only for the purchase price of the ticket.

Theatre patrons who disturb others by loud talking or distracting actions or disturbing mannerisms, can be ejected from the theatre if they persist in their disturbance after being cautioned by the manager or one of the staff. Tact and commonsense should be exercised in handling such matters. Care should be taken to avoid the mistake of offending the patron. Force may be used to eject a disturber after a reasonable time is given for him to leave of his own accord. The use of undue force presents the possibility of liability. The degree of force used, and whether it was justified is a matter of litigation, depending upon the circumstances themselves. It is cautioned that theatre employees be properly instructed concerning their conduct in such emergencies. A noisy, argumentative, blundering usher can cause serious inconvenience to the audience.

Records.

Because legal action may sometimes follow the ejection of a patron from the theatre, a manager should make sure of witnesses and have a detailed report covering the occurrence so that he will be safeguarded before the law. The mere fact that a disturbing patron can be ejected from the theatre does not justify the manager acting rashly. Very often tactful handling of the situation will get the desired results, without causing future ill-feeling. The mere mention of legal rights to a patron often acts as a challenge, and the patron resolves to try legal

action just to "see who is right." Therefore, handle the matter personally. Quiet persuasion is better than cold, unfeeling reminders about "legal rights." In this connection it is sugguested that argumentative patrons be brought as quickly as possible from the auditorium or from the lobby to the manager's office so that other patrons will not be disturbed. It is stupid for the manager to carry on his argument where others overhear it, simply to have an audience whom he can convince that he is right. In the quiet of the manager's office many a problem can be readily smoothed out and the patron sent away satisfied.

Copyright Laws.

The unauthorized use of certain copyrighted music without the payment of the music tax leaves the manager liable for damages. Information on the music-tax regulation and lists of tax-free music are available, so that there is no excuse for blundering in this matter. Managers who use current musical comedy pieces without proper authority leave themselves open to lawsuits.

Copyright laws have a bearing on certain advertising practices. You may be doing certain things which you suppose to be legally right, and yet never had any trouble because no one objected. But the objection might come when you least expect it, and so would the legal consequences.

In using photographs of people in your community for advertising purposes, be sure that permission is secured and that you have this permission in writing. Do not use the name of motion-picture stars to endorse any product without the express permission of that star. Because the star in a certain production uses the product, you are not justified in advertising that the star uses such a product generally. You can refer only to its use in that particular production. Copyrighted articles can be used only when kept in the mediums in which they appear.

Cartoons cannot be copied without permission. Illustrations and slogans cannot be taken from other advertising for your own use. Common sense will serve as a guide in these matters. It does not take very long to secure necessary permission, so why leave yourself open to serious consequences?

If you are not sure that permission will be given, then why take the risk?

Negro Patronage.

In certain states it is a misdemeanor to discriminate against any citizen because of age, creed or color. Accordingly, where such legislation is active, the management cannot refuse to sell a ticket of admission simply because of "age, creed, or color." The matter of segregating negro patrons and others to certain parts of the house is one that should be settled according to local conditions. The matter is mentioned here because it is advisable not to act until you know what the local regulations are. This is also covered by Constitutional Amendment XV.

Lotteries and Contests.

In theatre operation there is no more fruitful source of trouble than the lottery and prize schemes, which often are helpful in building business where they can be worked, but which require careful handling.

In some states the lottery laws are liberal. If you work a scheme that is legal in such a state, you may be perfectly safe so long as you hold your contest to that state. But if you advertise your stunt in the newspapers or mail out any announcement, you immediately come under the very drastic federal laws, which were framed to put the old Louisiana Lottery out of business.

A lottery comprehends three factors. There must exist a "valuable prize," a "valuable consideration" and the "element of chance."

The "valuable prize" may be anything from a penny whistle to a house and lot or an automobile.

The "valuable consideration" may be anything from a cash-paid ticket to any slight service. To illustrate: a manager threw away several hundred envelopes printed on the face "this may contain a free ticket." One envelope in each ten contained a pass. The others contained only heralds. They were dropped on the street, placed on store counters and slipped into doorways and letter boxes. The New York post-office held this to be a lottery. Under their ruling it was held

that the service performed in opening the envelope was the "valuable consideration."

Sometimes programs are stamped with consecutive numbers. Some of these numbers may win prizes at a certain performance. The holder does not pay for the program, but if he has to be in the theatre to obtain the prize, the purchase of an admission ticket is held to be the valuable consideration. He pays no more than he would to attend any other performance, but it is held that he attends this particular performance in the hope of winning a prize, so a lottery exists.

The "Country Store" where merchandise is given, is held a lottery in all states, but in some states it has been held that if there is no drawing, the third element is lacking and a lottery does not exist. In other words, the manager may, in the goodness of his heart, present any patron with a ham, a morris chair or a stick of candy, if he so desires. As a rule, however, the mere act of decision can be held to be the element of chance.

It is illegal to announce that you will give presents to the first two hundred or ten hundred persons attending your performance. In many states you may announce that you have a stated number of presents and will give them out "while they last."

It is unsafe to hold any sort of contest in which any awards are drawn for. It is unsafe to offer free admission to every tenth patron, or use any similar idea. You may escape trouble for years, but you may get into serious trouble your next try. It is well to avoid all lotteries.

It is also a lottery to offer prizes for the "first" answers received to a contest. It does not matter to the authorities whether you draw a number from a box or draw a letter. Qualify such contests. You use a cutout which must be pasted up. Do not offer a prize for the "first" reply, but make your award on "neatness and originality."

This is where the contest differs from the lottery. A contest is held to be a test of skill. If you ask a patron to guess how many beans there are in a jar, you are running a lottery; but if you permit everyone, without fee, to "estimate" the rumber of beans, then it becomes a matter of skill.

In such contests, entry blanks must be readily available, free to everyone, and the winners must be announced publicly and not through the theatre.

You cannot stage a contest in which a person is given a prize for the best name for a picture, the best new ending or anything of similar nature, if it is reasonably necessary that the contestant see the picture in your theatre. In such a contest you must post the full story in front of your theatre, that all may compete without the obligation of buying a ticket. If they want to go in and see the picture, that is their concern, but do not make a visit to the theatre obligatory.

Legal contests must be unlimited, except that these may be held to classes or to persons of certain ages, such as a drawing contest for children under sixteen or a similar limitation; but even here the contest must be open to all and not limited to those who have attended the theatre, or who must attend to receive the prize awarded.

In all prize contests (as distinct from lotteries), the postoffice requires that the prizes must be definitely stated, that provision must be made for two or more equal prizes in the event of a tie, and that the closing date of the contest must be definitely stated. No entrance fee may be demanded, and the awards must be publicly announced.

In the event of a tie you cannot split the prize or let the tie winners draw for first and second. If you offer an automobile as first prize, you must bestow a second automobile of the announced make and value, in the event of a tie.

Voting contests are held not to be a lottery, but on all other contests it is well to consult not only your lawyer but your postmaster. The postal laws have teeth to them and the postoffice inspectors have uncomfortably long arms.

Conclusion.

Do not wait until you are notified of the violation of some local ordinance. Would it not be better to have these ordinances summarized for ready reference and determine your operation accordingly? Why try to guess at matters of liability when you can arrange for the possible emergencies that might arise at the theatre and then work out the solution of each so

that liability would not be involved? The amount of money incurred by the liability is not the chief consideration. The theatre's reputation is at stake. Lawsuits against the theatre, no matter how they are decided, certainly do not help the theatre's reputation. Every disgruntled patron has many friends. Both the patron and his friends become enemies of the theatre. So with your understanding of how the law applies to certain details of your operation, add tact, common sense and the willingness to apologize politely and the habit of showing a personal interest and the evident desire to assist. These are more appreciated by the patron than anything else.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THAT'S OUR BUSINESS

THEY used to call it the Show Game. Then it was called the Show game. Then it was called the Show business. Then it was called the Show Business. Now it is called the Show Business. The emphasis is placed where it belongs. It is a business—a business in which the untrained should not dabble. It requires more than a flashy vest, a broad-brimmed hat, a loud voice, and a flashy tie.

It was very much of a gamble when canvas tents were the only protection against the weather. Now substantial structures of steel and marble have replaced the tents. It was a gamble when performers were scarce—and temperamental—and when among people generally a living wage and leisure were equally scarce. Even now, because human nature is fickle, and preferences change, and investments must be made before revenue is guaranteed, there is about it some element of uncertainty.

But any business which satisfies a natural human craving at a reasonable price is stable. Motion-picture theatre entertainment is founded on a human desire almost as intense as the desire for food. The wholesome gratification of that desire is succeeding; our great motion-picture theatres are monuments to its success.

Because it is a business, it requires all the qualifications of the good business man: common sense, tact, willingness to work, ability to sell, plus qualities of imagination, originality, and human understanding. Ability to sell does not mean passing out goods over the counter; mere delivery is not salesmanship.

Before compeptition was intense, and when the novelty of picture entertainment drew large audiences, intensive, reliable selling was not so essential. To-day, when the novelty no longer exists, and when competition is keen, the individual theatre succeeds because of salesmanship. Whether the sales-

man is called the manager, the director of publicity, or the sales-promotion expert makes no difference. New names do not change old facts. Call the barber a tonsorialist, and he is still a barber; call the chauffeur an automotive engineer, and he is still a chauffeur; call the real estate agent a realtor, and he sells the same thing; call the camera man a cinematographer, and he is still the same; call the undertaker a mortician, and by any other name he would still do the same important work. The theatre which is conducted by principles of sound management, and showing a profit because someone there knows how to sell entertainment, need not be bothered about the titles on letterheads.

Here is a business to which has been applied the expression, "The showman must be born and not made." This involves, of course, the birthright which carries a knowledge of all the details of operation which the capable manager supervises—projection, lighting, advertising, market analysis, copy writing, layout, stagecraft, ventilation, equipment maintenance, display, color, and all the other really technical details of local operation.

Strange to say, the "showman" who operated one of the first nickelodeons in New York thirty years ago is now in a Texas village operating a "shoot-'em-up" ten-cent store show. Perhaps that is his preference. But at any rate here is a business in which the God-given birthright supposedly limited to God's favorite showmen does not eliminate the possibility of success by hard work and hard thinking.

There is no single text-book for the show business—unless it be life itself. The business develops so rapidly and people's preferences are so fickle that a machine-made routine which might be successful to-day, may be a failure to-morrow. However, there are some fixed principles which will always apply as long as business is business, and as long as human beings are human.

Fortunately, this business has up-to-the-minute helps in the form of trade papers. These trade papers are not appreciated as they should be. They are a service to the industry. In any issue, anyone who is striving for perfection will find an idea which, when applied, will more than pay for the subscription

to 52 copies or 312 copies. Even the advertising carried by trade papers is a service to the readers. This advertising is becoming more and more serviceable. The amount of money spent for trade-paper advertising is not excessive. In fact, it is below the average allotted for other products in trade papers of other industries. The only limitation to the reading of trade papers is one of time, and not of subscription expense. In all fairness, the trade papers, and we can list them here in alphabetical order, are something of which the industry can be proud. They are:

Exhibitors' Daily Review
Exhibitors' Herald
Film Daily
Motion Picture News
Moving Pictures Today
Moving Picture World
Variety

Then there are sectional trade papers and dailies like "The New York Morning Telegraph" and house organs of producer-distributors, all helping to keep the retailer of motion pictures not only well informed, but equipped with merchandising ideas.

The man who knows it all can perhaps afford to overlook the trade papers; others cannot. No one ever knows it all in a business which moves so rapidly. An indication of efficient management is efficient reading of the trade papers. The first requisite for success in any business is "Know your business." It has been said, "The successful man in any business is the man with the most information."

To the outsider this seems a fascinating business. It seems glamorous. It seems romantic. It seems glorified. Actually, although one must keep an eye on the glamorous appeal of the unique, intangible product sold at the theatre, the full focus of attention must be given to business details. As in any business, success is measured by one thing: PROFITS.

It is a fascinating business, so much so that it has been said, "Once a theatre manager, always a theatre manager." This is not because the work is easy. An eight-hour day would

mean that the working hours of the average showman were cut in half.

There is a fascination in the work which makes men forget to keep an eye on the clock. The fascination lies in this: They are selling *happiness*. There is little fascination in setting bricks, or turning cranks, or pulling ropes, or driving nails, or casting steel. There is real fascination in selling *happiness*.

Reformers claim that the "show business is selling sex." No institution can last and depend for its revenue upon a decent public, and sell anything but decency. A few exceptions are illogically used to condemn a business which is, and which must be, decent because it caters to the majority, and the majority is always decent. God made people that way.

When sex magazines, sex novels, sex tabloids, sex legitimate plays are constantly selling "dirt" to a small minority, it is significant that the motion-picture theatre is still selling decently to the majority, and selling decently because the majority is decent. There will be a change only when God makes people differently.

The manager of even the smallest theatre can hold up his head in any community. If he is measuring up to the responsibility which has been entrusted to him, he takes his place with the educator, the doctor, the social worker, the publisher, the clergyman, the newspaper man, the soldier, the policeman, and the merchant.

This may seem exaggerated at first glance. Yet he is curing what doctors cannot cure. He is co-operating with the social worker. He is educating visually, while the educator must use the tedious, round-about medium of words. Like the publisher and the newspaper man, he is helping to circulate messages that will instruct and inspire. Like the policeman, he has entrusted to him the safekeeping of many lives with the same moral responsibility. If the clergyman teaches and guides and inspires, so does the man who gives the community the instruction and the inspiration which comes from "The Covered Wagon," "The Ten Commandments," "Beau Geste," "Old Ironsides," "The Iron Horse," "The Big Parade," "The

Hunchback of Notre Dame," etc. The soldier can do no more than be a patriot. Yet the inculcation of the full meaning of patriotism comes from such things as "The Birth of a Nation," "The Rough Riders," "America," "North of 36," and any number of photoplays which speak the visual message of patriotism more eloquently than could any verbal message.

The motion-picture theatre is now a cathedral of entertainment, a palace of dreams. Almost every American city can boast of a structure which merits such a title. If the rest of the world is a few steps behind in theatre development, this is due to exceptional conditions, and not to a failure to realize the part that motion-picture entertainment can play in the lives of people.

The rest of the world will soon keep pace—very soon—for the theatre is essential everywhere. The need of relaxation, diversion and amusement is as old as mankind. The wealthy can meet this social need with other amusements that can be bought with wealth. For the majority, the motion-picture theatre is practically indispensable. It has stabilized social life by meeting a social need in an environment of cleanliness and beauty.

The celluloid film grinding through the projection machines of the world is knitting into closer unity the peoples of every language. It speaks the only universal language, and is spreading a common understanding among the peoples of the world.

Selling happiness—building theatre patronage—starts at the author's desk, continues through every department at the studio, continues through those who distribute films, and continues in every detail of theatre operation. The theatre manager—the retailer—without the product, can do nothing. The product—no matter how superior—without efficient retailing in theatres efficiently operated will bring small revenue.

Those who have a part in selling happiness are happy. A messenger boy who hurries about the studio is happy because he feels that he has a part in the business of selling happiness. He's right. The file clerk at the exchange is happy because

she feels that she has a part in selling happiness. She's right. The page boy at the theatre feels that he has a part in selling happiness. He's right. Every link in the chain is important. Increase in the number of those who will get the happiness depends upon the strength of the chain. It has all been welded for one purpose—and—that's our business:

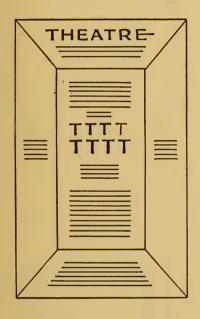
BUILDING THEATRE PATRONAGE.

APPENDIX OF FORMS AND CHARTS







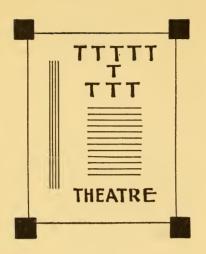


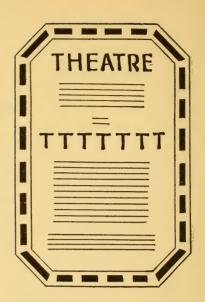


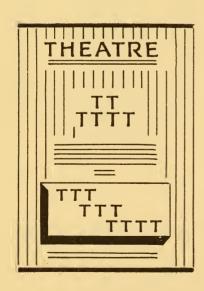


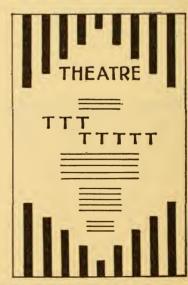


SUGGESTED ADVERTISING LAYOUTS









ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES OF LAYOUTS



AN EXAMPLE OF ACTUAL NEWSPAPER LAYOUT

In this example the type sizes have been suggested, but specific type faces have not been called for. It would be better, where possible, to specify the particular face required, but this need not be done where the compositor can be depended upon to give a good result on his own initiative. Large masses of small type may be indicated merely by drawn lines and identified by letters marked on the typewritten copy accompanying the layout.

MARQUEE LETTERING

MARQUEE LETTERING									
Date									
- Date-									
FRONT SIGN—26 Spaces									
EAST SIDE SIGN—18 Spaces									
WEST SIDE SIGN—18 Spaces									
Color of Lamps									
Color of Lamps									
N. I. C.Y. II. II. II. II.									
Number of Letters Initial Letters									
A H O V B I P W C J Q X									
D K R Y Remarks									
F M T & G N U 30 HUMERALS									

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ATISING
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VERTISIN

WEEK

- ()	· •	49-
COST	POSTING	SCREEN NOVELTIES
TOTAL	LITHOG. CHARGE	SCREEN
FRI SAT	SIX TWENTY-FOUR	LOBBY
WED THUR FR	SIX	WINDOW
MON TUE	THREE	Rotos
S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S	SHEET	HERALDS
NEWSPAPERS	OUTDOOR	MISC.

WEEKLY ADV. TOTAL

REMARKS

CHART

GROUPING SALES ACTIVITIES

the state of the s					
Inside Theatre	Lobby	Outdoor	Cooperative	Newspaper	Other Mediums
Slides	Panels	Bill Boards	Windows	Display Adv.	Fan Magazines
Trailers	Displays	Perambulators	Mailing	Directory Adv.	National Adv.
Programs	Shadow-Boxes	Hangers	Clubs	Readers	Radio
Mailing	Вох Оffice	Throw-Aways	Libraries	Cooperative Pages	Photo-play Editions
Staff	False Fronts	Snipes	Schools	Symposiums	Serial Syndication
Stage	Contests	Raffles	Packages	Contests	Etc.
Pre-views Etc.	Marquee Etc.	Autos Etc.	Societies Etc.	Essays Etc.	

WORD-OF-MOUTH COMMENT

PROJECTION REPORT

(Date) Time Defect Cause 1. Unsteady Picture 2. Poor Definition 3. Travel Ghost 4. Flicker 5. Distortion 6. Poor Illumination 7. Blank Screen 8. Improper Speed (Unnatural Movement) 9. Fuzzy Border 10. Mis-Frames 11. Sprocket Holes Showing on Screen

RELATIVE HUMIDITY TABLE

Readings of Dry-Bulb Thermometer	Difference in Degrees Between Dry-Bulb and Bulb Thermometers									*	et-				
Readings Dry-Bulb Thermom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
60 61 62	94 94 94	89 89 89	84 84 84	78 79 79	73 74 74	68 68 69	63 64 64	58 59 60	53 54 55	49 50 50	44 45 46	40 40 41	35 36 37	31 32 33	27 28 29
63 64	95 95	90 90	84 85	79 79	74 75	70 70	65 66	60 61	56 56	51 52	47 48	42 43	38 39	34 35	30 31
65 66 67	95 95 95	90 90 90	85 85 85	80 80 80	75 76 76	70 71 71	66 66 67	62 62	57 58 58	53 53 54	48 49 50	44 45 46	40 41 42	36 37 38	32 33 34
68 69 70	959595	90 90 90	85 86 86	81 81 81	76 77 77	72 72 72	67 68 68	63 64 64	595960	55 55 56	515152	47 47 48	43 44 44	39 40 40	35 36 37
71 72 73	95 95 95	90 91 91	86 86 86	82 82 82	77 78 78	73 73 73	69 69 69	64 65 65	60 61 61	56 57 58	53 53 54	49 49 50	45 46 46	41 42 43	38 39 40
74 75	95 96	91 91	86	82 82	78 78	74	70 70	66 66	62 63	58 59	545555	51 51	48	44	40
76 77 78 79	96 96 96 96	91 91 91 91	87 87 87 87	83 83 83 83	78 79 79 79	74 75 75 75	70 71 71 71	67 67 67 68	63 63 64 64	59 60 60 60	55565757	52 52 53 54	48 49 50 50	45 46 46 47	42 42 43 44
80 82	96 96	91 91 92	87 88	83 84	79 80	76 76	72 72	68 69	64 65	61 62	57 58	54 55	51 52	47 49	44 46
84 86 88	96 96 96	92 92 92	88 88 88	84 85 85	80 81 81	77 77 78	73 74 74	70 70 71	66 67 67	63 63 64	59 60 61	56 57 58	53 54 55	50 51 52	47 48 49

WHAT ARE YOUR PREFERENCES?

Mark with an x the type of photoplay you prefer: Comedy-Melodrama-Historical Western-Mystery-Romance Which do you prefer? Mark with an x: 2. Scenics Cartoons One-reel comedies 3. Please name your favorite stars: Female 1..... 3 Please name your favorite directors: 1..... . 2..... 3 Please name your favorite local motion picture critic: What motion picture magazine do you prefer? Please indicate below any detail of operation 7. for your criticism or commendation: Name_____Address_____

CAMPAIGN ANALYSIS

01	211 011 2111212	11 010				
	PROGRAM	Feature News Reel Short Subjects Stage Number Organ Number Overture				
1. Product	INSTITUTION	Admission Price Location Service Orchestra Seating Ventilation Conveniences Etc.				
	ATTENDANCE	Regular Occasional Stranger				
2. Prospects	LOCATION	Pass Lobby Streets Neighborhoods Suburbs Out-of-Town Visitors				
	APPEALS .	Social Readers Business Family Sex Clubs Fan Magazines Nationality Star Fans Etc.				
3. Mediums	INSIDE THEATRE LOBBY OUTDOOR COOPERATIVE NEWSPAPER ADV. AMUSEMENT PAGE NATIONAL ADV.	Adv. Materials Available 'Cost Coverage Duplication Word-of-Mouth Limitations Timeliness Appropriate Seasonal Novelty Check-up				

